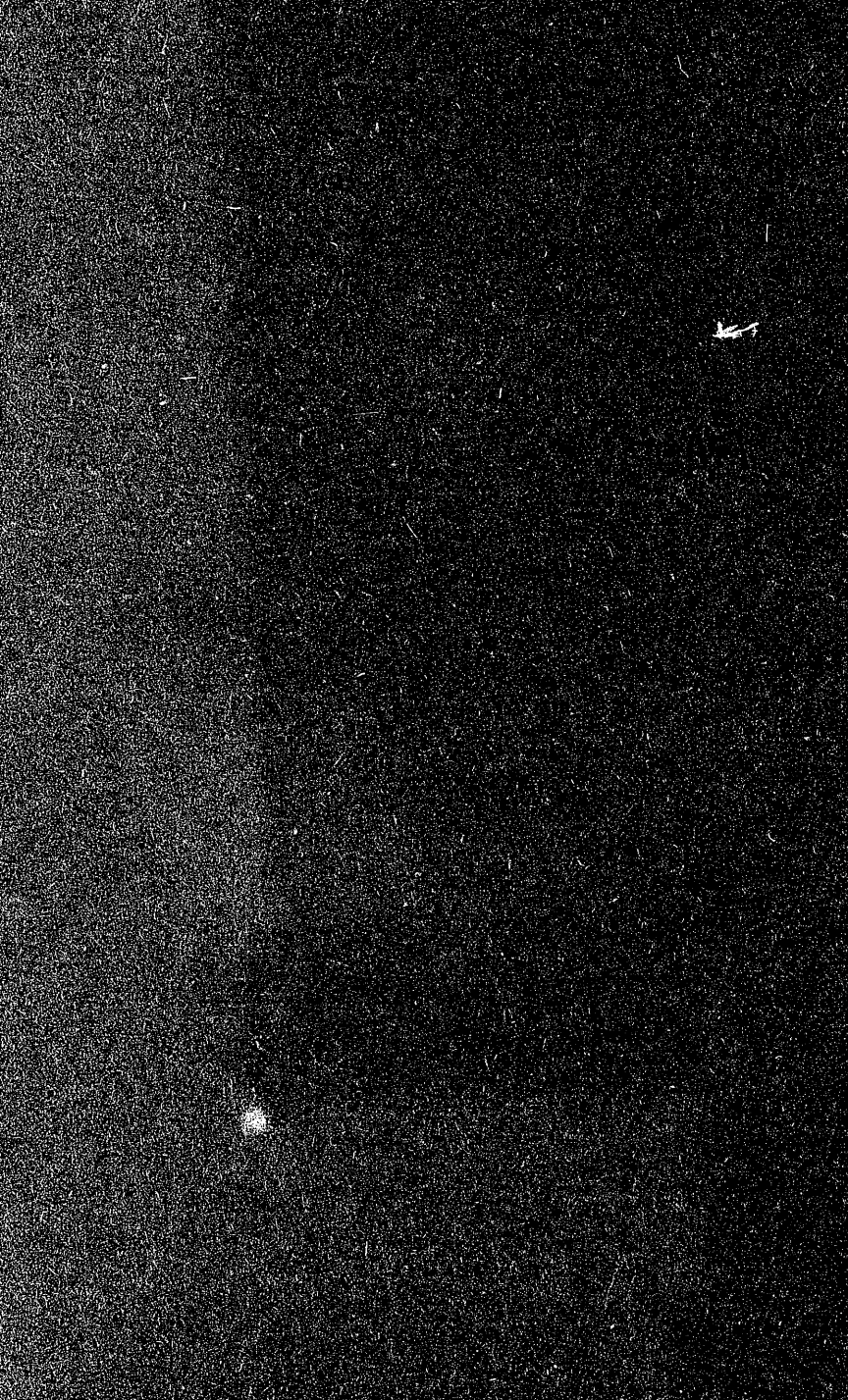
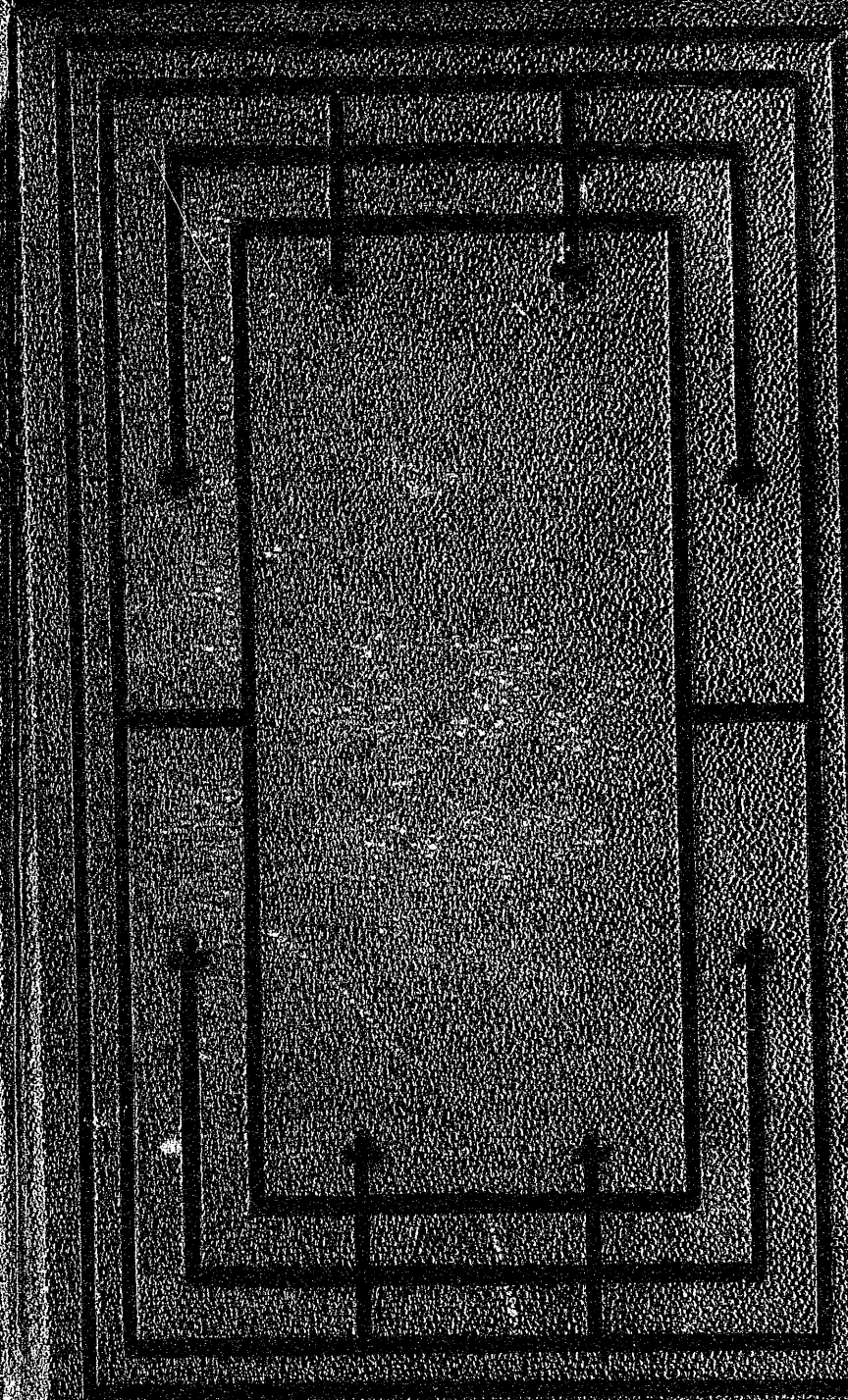






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THE SERVICE OF SONG:

A TREATISE ON SINGING

IN PRIVATE DEVOTION,

IN THE

FAMILY AND IN THE SCHOOL,

AND IN

The Worshipping Congregation.

BY

REV. A. G. STACY, A. M.

"

Praise ye the Lord.

SAINT LOUIS:

SOUTHWESTERN BOOK AND PUBLISHING COMPANY,

510 AND 512 WASHINGTON AVENUE.

1871.

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 EDUCATION.

TO THE
COMPILER OF SEVERAL COLLECTIONS
OF
HYMNS AND SONGS,
REV. THOS. O. SUMMERS, D. D.,
WHOM THE AUTHOR OF THIS VOLUME IS
PERMITTED TO CLAIM AS HIS PERSONAL FRIEND
AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED BROTHER IN
CHRIST, THIS BOOK IS AFFECTION-
ATELY INSCRIBED.



P R E F A C E .

The Author of this unpretending volume has long looked in sadness upon the indifference manifested by many in the service of song. Thousands who have the ability to sing maintain a careless silence in the church; and of those who sing, many are evidently destitute, to a very great extent, of the spirit of worship. Even ministers are but too frequently seen burying their own talent for song, while they allow habitual remissness in others without uttering a word of instruction, encouragement or warning. Observation of this inattention to a matter of prime importance convinced the writer, several years ago, that something should be done to bring up the practice of the Church to the Scriptural rule.

Supposing that there were already extant books and tracts on the subject of Praise in Song, we searched many private libraries, but could find no works of the kind. Special inquiry was then made at sundry book-stores and publishing houses, but with little success. From Columbia and Charleston, S. C., Nashville, Tenn., and 200 Mulberry street, New York, and other cities, nothing could be obtained but a few books on Psalm-singing, Hymnology, and Musical history.

A few other valuable publications of the same character were procured from the private library of David Creamer, Esq., of Baltimore, most of them imported by him from England about twenty-five years ago.

None of these volumes are in general circulation in this country; and in none of them is the general subject of singing so fully discussed as to meet the desideratum. Hence, we reached the conclusion that *one more book* was greatly needed. Friends were consulted, and among them the Book Editor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Nashville. Their views coincided with our own, and we were encouraged to undertake the work. Urged by a sense of duty, we took up our pen, determined to publish or suppress what should be written, as judicious advisers might suggest. The present volume is the result.

We have paid due respect to the productions of both ancient and modern writers; but have steadily kept in view our own plan, and have fearlessly expressed our own views. Above all, we have made the Bible "the man of our counsel."

To have written in the absence of all books save the Holy Scriptures, would have cost us only about a tithe of the time and labor devoted to the work, but we thought conclusions reached after free discussion preferable to dogmatism.

It is hoped that the book will be found to be Christianly liberal. There is here no doctrinal controversy to offend

those whose creeds differ from that of the author. In what is said of Church usage we have written freely, but kindly. Our aim has been to prepare a manual for the edification and comfort of Christians generally, and which may interest and profit those who are without the pale of the Church.

At every step we have desired that a theme so transcendently important should be treated by an abler hand; and, without the kind words and favorable opinion of those upon whose judgment we could rely, the work had never been finished. In this connection we take pleasure in mentioning the names of the Rev. T. O. Summers, D. D., and the Rev. W. A. Gamewell. The latter now sings in heaven.

Being especially solicitous to reach the heart, we converse with the reader as friend would talk to friend.

The preparation of the work has been a blessing to us, and if its perusal shall be alike beneficial to the reader, we shall be a thousand times compensated for the time and effort expended.

May we meet in the land of light and love. There we shall forever behold and worship "The King in His beauty." But "who can show forth all His praise."

Our offering, humble though it be, is laid upon the altar of Him "who is above all blessing and praise." May it be graciously accepted.

THE AUTHOR.

LEXINGTON, MO., *January 14, 1871.*



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INTRODUCTION.

We had the pleasure of perusing the manuscript of this work when it was first written. Circumstances prevented the publication of the work at the time, and the author has availed himself of the delay in making important additions to it. We are glad it is now to appear in print. We bespeak for it a wide circulation, as it is eminently good to the use of edifying. We rejoice in every effort put forth to increase an interest in the "Service of song in the house of the Lord."

The *cultus* of the Church in this country has been very defective in this matter. We do not mean that we have not a sufficiently copious and suitable Psalmody. In this respect the Church—the Methodist Church in particular—is well endowed.

There is the inspired Psalter, together with the beautiful canticles interspersed through the Bible, which might be sung and chanted greatly to the

edification of the Church. The translators of our authorized version of the Bible were singularly happy in rendering these inspired hymns; and we like to hear them sung in the noble words which have been hallowed by the use of English-speaking Christians for centuries.

Imitations of these songs of Zion were used by the Church in the days of the Apostles, and so have they been in every succeeding age.

Pliny, writing to Trajan, says the Christians were accustomed to meet together on a stated day, before it was light, and to sing a hymn to Christ, as to a god, alternately.

The earliest Christian hymn which has come down to our times was written in Greek, by Clemens Alexandrinus, who flourished about a hundred years after the death of John the Evangelist. It is a pleasing and suggestive fact, that that hymn was composed for the children of the Church. It is found in his *Pedagogue*. An old Latin version is sometimes bound up with it. A rough version of a portion of it may be found in our "Hymns for Schools and Families," beginning, "Shepherd of tender youth."

As songs and ballads are the most effective vehicles of instruction and influence, so that Andrew Fletcher, of Saltoun, is reported to have said that he cared not who wrote the laws of the nation, if he might write its ballads, we need not wonder that they were largely employed for this purpose, as well as for the expression of devotional sentiment, in the Primitive Church.

When the Arians availed themselves of this potent instrumentality for the spread of their heresy, Chrysostom counteracted them by furnishing orthodox hymns for the use of the faithful.

Augustin, in the Western Church, made a hymn in imitation of Psalm cxix., to check the Donatists, who composed hymns for the propagation of their errors.

Before his time, Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, and Prudentius, a Spaniard, composed Latin hymns, which were extensively used in the Western Church.

The *Trisagion*, or Cherubical Hymn, in its simplest form, has come down to us, perhaps, from the third century. It is found in the so-called

Apostolical Constitutions, as is the *Gloria in Excelsis*.

The *Gloria Patri* was introduced to check the Arian heresy.

The *Te Deum* was probably composed by Nicetus, Bishop of Triers, in Gaul, in the sixth century, and has been in nearly universal use ever since.

During the Middle Ages the piety of the Church, almost smothered as it was by superstition, flamed forth occasionally in such productions as the *Stabat Mater*, *Dies Iræ*, etc., which have been translated into the modern tongues. They are venerable relics of those dark centuries; but neither they nor the Hymns of the Primitive Church are likely to come much into popular use.

At the time of the Reformation the sacred muse was invoked more than ever before. Luther composed many fine hymns in German, as well as tunes, which became very popular.

Clement Marot, groom of the bed-chamber of Francis I., and Theodore Beza versified the Psalms in French, and had tunes set to them.

Thomas Sternhold, one of the grooms of the

bed-chamber of Edward VI., John Hopkins, and others, versified the Psalter in English. Their version, rough as it is, became popular in England.

A version was afterward made by Francis Rous, Provost of Eton under the Commonwealth, which subsequently became, and still continues to be, the authorized Psalmody of the Scottish Churches.

In 1696, Nahum Tate, D. D., Poet Laureate, and Nicholas Brady, D. D., Vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, published "A New Version of the Psalms of David," which took the place of the version of Sternhold and Hopkins in the Church of England, and is still used by that Church and its offshoots.

"The Psalms of David, imitated in the language of the New Testament," by Dr. Isaac Watts, was published in 1719, and, with his "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," became very popular, especially among English Dissenters. They are a lasting heritage to all English-speaking Churches.

Charles Wesley and other members of the Wesley family versified the Psalter, a few Psalms excepted, and wrote thousands of hymns, many of which surpass all other uninspired songs.

It is not necessary to refer to the hundreds of

other sacred poets who have tested the powers of our noble tongue to enrich the service of song in the house of the Lord.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of this delightful part of the worship of the Church. There is not a doctrine or duty of our holy religion that is not inculcated in the most winning manner by holy song.

In David's Psalter we have Psalms "to give instruction," and "to bring to remembrance," didactic and historical Psalms, which were used in the tabernacle, temple, and synagogue worship.

The reformers of the age, who would exclude all but distinctively devotional hymns, make a great mistake. The Jewish Church and the Primitive Christian Church, as we have seen, availed themselves of the power of song to inform the mind, as well as to inflame the affections. It is easy enough to adapt suitable tunes to hymns of a didactic character. Such hymns may be sung with good effect immediately before sermon.

Then there are subjective and hortatory hymns, which, used after sermon, enforce the subject-matter of the discourse with singular power. Indeed,

such hymns not unfrequently put the minds of the hearers into a proper frame to receive the word, and should be used accordingly.

It is eminently proper to open public worship with hymns of a highly devotional character, not only because it is our duty to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," to "come into his presence with thanksgiving and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms," "to show forth his loving-kindness and faithfulness upon an instrument of ten strings, upon the harp with a solemn sound," or with such other accessories as we can command, but because nothing so readily exorcises the worldly spirit, and puts us into a frame for all the other duties of the sanctuary, as songs of praise and thanksgiving. The evil spirit departed from Saul when David played his harp. Elisha calmed his own troubled spirit, when it had been ruffled by the presence of the impious King of Israel, by sacred minstrelsy. While the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord came upon the prophet, and he prophesied. What preacher has not felt the mighty influence of an inspiring song, attuning his spirit for his holy work!

Dr. Johnson never committed a greater mistake than when he said, in his *Life of Dr. Watts*: “His devotional poetry is like that of others—unsatisfactory. The paucity of its topics enforces perpetual repetition, and the sanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction. It is sufficient for Watts to have done better than others, what no man has done well.” In saying this, he reproves others beside Watts and other uninspired poets. One would think the great Leviathan of English literature had never read David’s Psalter, the *Benedicite*, the *Benedictus*, the *Magnificat*, the *Nunc Dimittis*, and the rapturous canticles of the Apocalypse, phonographed by the Eagle-evangelist, who caught the volumes of holy song, as they burst from the heavenly choristers and the “harpers harping with their harps!” Strange to say, Johnson could never read a certain stanza of the *Dies Iræ* without the most powerful emotion!

But, not to be prolix, we express the hope that this excellent treatise will have a wide circulation, and that its perusal will bring into more general use the incomparable hymns which constitute the authorized Psalmody of our Communion, and at

the same time promote "the service of song" in all the churches of the saints.

We hope, too, that it will promote the revival of domestic psalmody, that delightful part of the worship of "the Church in the house," which has, unhappily, gone greatly into desuetude among us.

Nothing so identifies us with the worshipers in the upper temple, nothing so prepares us to join in their worship, nay, "to mend the choirs above," as to sing praises unto God while we have any being on the earth.

The songs of the temple voice out the harmony of the spheres, and constitute the sweetest music in the orchestra of the universe.

There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdst,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim,
Such harmony is in immortal souls.

Happy those whose spirits chime in with this divine minstrelsy! "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee!"

"Let my due feet never fail" to go "to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude that keep holy-day."

There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes!

THOMAS O. SUMMERS.

NASHVILLE, TENN., *January 5, 1871.*

THE SERVICE OF SONG.

GENERAL SCRIPTURAL VIEW.

When the corner-stone of the earth was laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Long prior to this grand event, it had been the delight of the angels to sing their Maker's praise. Hence, when they saw this magnificent globe emerging out of chaos, as a brilliant reflector of the Divine perfections, they gave expression to their emotions in the loftiest strains of adoration.

In due time the first holy and happy pair are created, and enter upon their delectable inheritance. God himself communes with them, and the angels who held jubilee at the sunrise of time pay frequent visits to this Elysium, and celebrate in song the praises of Him who has spread out a scene so fair.

The sun by day, and the moon and stars by night, serve as shining preachers to the devout dwellers below; and the perpetual sermon is

amplified and rendered still more emphatic by the beauty and innocency of beasts and birds, by the verdure and flowers which garnish this lovely domain, by crystal streams as they roll over golden sands, and even by the atmosphere itself, which is as pure and balmy as breezes from the heavenly fields.

Can the hearts of this thrice happy pair remain unmoved? Can they behold this wondrous exhibition of their Father's love, or can they contemplate their present felicity and the bliss which awaits them, without uniting in the general chorus of praise? Can they refrain as

“The morn, her rosy steps in the Eastern clime
Advancing, sows the earth with Orient pearls?”

Can they hold their peace as the tranquil evening puts on her star-gemmed mantle? Silence under such circumstances, if not impossible, is in the highest degree unnatural. Sing they must, and well has Milton suggested as the words of their song his noble paraphrase of the one hundred and forty-eighth Psalm, and beautifully has he described their worship:

“Lowly they bowed, adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style: for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips in prose, or numerous verse,
More tunable than needed lute, or harp,
To add more sweetness.”

Alas, that this delightful song should so soon give place to the voice of wailing! Alas, that those who have been so highly exalted should experience so sad a fall!

But the promised "Seed of the woman" furnishes both men and angels with a new theme for praise. The Atonement converts the thorns and briars of the fall into a wreath of amaranth for Emmanuel's brow—the lamentations of the lost into joyful hosannas. Grateful songs ascend from this cursed and blighted earth to the Father of mercies.

In the Book of Genesis, covering a period of more than two thousand years, there is no positive mention made of devotional music; but we are not left without significant intimations. If the first unhappy pair trusted in a Savior to come and were reclaimed from their grievous fall, it is reasonable to suppose that they again sang the songs to which they had been accustomed in Eden, and that to these they added hymns referring to the glorious scheme of Redemption.

It is exceedingly probable that music, vocal and instrumental, was used in the service of God in the early ages of the world. Vocal music must have preceded instrumental. The human voice, the most perfect of all instruments, was first found to be capable of producing harmonious sounds, and, in the course of time, these were reproduced by artificial means. Men would not attempt to

avail themselves of adventitious aids before using the faculties with which they were endowed by nature. As well might we conceive that they would invent the lever and the telescope before having used the arm or the eye, as to suppose that they would practice on musical instruments before having attuned the voice to melody.

For the space of five hundred years, as it would seem, the human voice alone was employed in praise; then Jubal, the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ—the inventor, doubtless, of *stringed* and *wind* instruments—was born; and, for aught we know to the contrary, the first melodious strains of the harp and the organ were consecrated to God.

The first sacred song of which we have any account is that which was sung by the Israelites on the occasion of their triumphant passage of the Red Sea. Having escaped from their cruel taskmasters, they fly before Pharaoh and his host. We behold, with glad surprise, the receding waters as they leave a highway for the faithful fugitives. Now they throng the safe shore, while their foes are overwhelmed by the returning waves. The Egyptians whom they have seen to-day they shall see again no more forever.

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song: "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is

become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my fathers' God, and I will exalt Him," etc.

This fine ode contains a cheering prophecy of the effect of this tremendous judgment on the idolatrous nations of Edom, Moab and Canaan, the final settlement of the Israelites in the promised land, the building of the temple on Mount Zion, and the perpetuity of the dominion and worship of God. In allusion to the event which this song commemorates, the Psalmist, addressing the Deity, says: "Thy way is in the sea, Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

Powerful, indeed, must have been the impression produced by the singing of this, the earliest lyric poem extant. Let us listen for a moment to the jubilant notes of the glad thousands who stand on the "banks of deliverance." These glowing sentiments, made thrillingly emphatic by the vocal and instrumental music to which they were joined, should live everlastingly in the hearts of the Israelites.

It is supposed that the whole company were divided into two grand choirs, in which Moses and Aaron led the men, and Miriam the women. It seems, also, that they sang by turns, and with variations of soft and loud, adapted to the sentiments of the ode; the males, led by Moses or

Aaron, or both, singing the song, while Miriam, presiding over the female part of the choir and the instruments, called in their aid to swell the chorus by repeating the first stanza of the ode. Hence it is said: "Miriam answered them, 'Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.'"

Shortly after the Israelites commenced their wanderings through the wilderness, the Tabernacle was set up by the command of God; and, according to His direction, the Levites were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. Although we have no positive evidence of the fact, yet we have reason to believe that at this time singers and players on instruments were regularly appointed.

Moses was gathered to his fathers in sight of the promised possession, at the age of one hundred and twenty years. Previous to his departure he composed a song, setting forth both the goodness and the justice of God. It commences thus: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God."

About one thousand three hundred years B. C.

the Lord sold the children of Israel into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan, as a judgment for their evil deeds. Jabin oppressed them for twenty years, but at length they cried to God and He delivered them. The entire army of the Canaanites was slain on the field, except Sisera, the captain of the host, who fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. Being weary, and feeling secure from his pursuers, this war-chief fell asleep. Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail and a hammer, and went softly to him and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground. Here was a glorious deliverance for Israel, and the story of triumph should be embalmed in thankful song, which is done most admirably by Deborah, the prophetess: "At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead. The mother of Sisera looked out at a window and cried through the lattice, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot?'"

"From this song, as well as that of Moses (Deut. xxxii.), we see that the first as well as the best poets of antiquity were found among the Hebrews, and that the art of poetry was highly cultivated among them many hundreds of years before Greece or any other country of the world could boast of ode, or epic, or any kind of poetic composition. The idolizers of Greece and Italy

should not forget this : to Hebrew models both Greeks and Romans owe much of their perfection. Why are not these more studied? Why do we not go to the fountain-head?" *

Then we have the forcible and elegant song of Hannah, the prophetess, expressive of her gratitude to God for the gift of her son Samuel.

About four hundred and fifty years after the transit of the Red Sea, the Tabernacle service was more fully organized. David, being securely established upon his throne in Jerusalem, determined, in accordance with the Divine will, to remove the Ark from the city of Nob to the hill of Zion. On the occasion of the transportation the Levites sung the Psalm commencing : " Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, let them also that hate Him flee before Him ;" while " David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets."

But this attempt to bring up the Ark to Jerusalem was unsuccessful. God had commanded that it should be borne on the priests' shoulders. Instead of this, David had placed it upon a new cart drawn by oxen ; and Uzza having been smitten with instant death for profanely touching the Ark, even David became afraid of the Divine vengeance, and the vast multitude being dismissed, the Ark

* Dr. A. Clarke.

was deposited in the house of Obed-Edom, where it remained for three months. The second attempt to remove the Ark resulted favorably. It was a solemn occasion, although not less jubilant than the first. While the priests bore the Ark the singers sung or chanted that appropriate ode: "Lord, remember David and all his afflictions, how he swore unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob, saying, I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed, I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eye-lids, till I find out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

Everything pertaining to the service of God was now arranged in a proper and imposing manner.

"David, in order to give the best effect to the music of the Tabernacle, divided the four thousand Levites into twenty-four classes, who sung Psalms and accompanied them with music. Each of these classes was superintended by a leader placed over it, and they performed the duties which devolved upon them, each class a week at a time in succession. The classes collectively, as a united body, were superintended by three directors. This arrangement was subsequently continued by Solomon after the erection of the temple, and was transmitted till the time of the overthrow of Jerusalem. It was, indeed, sometimes interrupted during the reigns of the idolatrous kings, but was restored by their successors. It should

be remarked, however, that neither music nor poetry attained to the same excellence after the captivity as before that period.

“There were women singers as well as men in the temple choir, for in the Book of Ezra, among those who returned from the Babylonish captivity, there are said to have been two hundred and forty-five singing men and women. The Jewish doctors will, indeed, by no means admit that there were any female voices in the temple choir; and as for those *meshoreroth*, as they are called in the Hebrew, they suppose them to be the wives of those who sung. Nevertheless, the following passage makes it evident that women, likewise, were thus employed: ‘God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters; and all these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God.’” *

“It was for the raising up of men’s hearts and the sweetening of their affections toward God that the prophet David, having had singular knowledge, not in poetry alone, but in music also, judged them both to be things most necessary for the house of God.” †

It seems that David was raised up and qualified to establish the ordinance of singing in the Church, as Moses and Aaron were in their day for the pur-

* Richard Watson.

† Hooker.

pose of enforcing and regulating the offering of sacrifices; hence he is called, by eminence, "the Sweet Psalmist of Israel."

We have now reached, in our review, the golden age of Hebrew poetry and song. David is in the zenith of his glory, and the high praises of God are, doubtless, celebrated in a more becoming and impressive manner than at any time since the exile from Paradise. At this point we might tarry long. We might speak of the heaven-inspired poems of David and the other "Bards of the Bible," and we might dwell upon the music of the Hebrews in general—their military, festive and funeral music. We might speak of King Jehoshaphat, who, as a means of insuring victory, on going out to battle against the Moabites and the Ammonites, "appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever." We might speak of the enthusiastic welcome of David by the fair minstrels of Judea after his victory over the Philistines, as it is said, "the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." We might listen with delight to the animating strains which greet the Prodigal Son on his return to his father's house; or we might, with weeping, respond to the wails of sorrow which tell us of the decease of Jairus' daughter.

But our plan looks more particularly to Jewish sacred music.

There was singing as well as prayer at the dedication of the temple built by Solomon; and if the prayer offered up by the royal architect was memorable, so the musical service was transcendently imposing. This might have been expected from the immense size and surpassing splendor of the edifice, the number of persons employed in its erection, the length of time occupied in collecting the materials and completing the structure, the sacred uses to which it was to be devoted, and the general and joyful expectation with which the opening of so celebrated a building had been anticipated.

Josephus says that "two hundred thousand musicians were employed at the opening of the temple." This we may consider an exaggeration; but even if we deduct three-fourths from the estimate, the number will still be astonishingly great—well befitting the grandeur of the occasion.

The following is the Scriptural account: "The Levites which were singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. It came to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising

and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voices with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth forever, that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.”*

It is supposed that portions of the song-service in the tabernacle, and subsequently in the temple, were executed by the Levites alone, while some pieces were sung in alternate parts by them and by the people, the whole multitude lifting up their voices in chorus. In general, however, when the praise of Jehovah was celebrated, the entire body of worshipers joined in the exercise.

“The singing of the ancient Hebrews was different from the cantillation practiced by the modern Jews in their synagogues; and although much simpler than the artistic music of these days, there being but a single part, sung by all alike, only three, four, or five notes higher or lower, according to the range of the singer’s voice; and though louder and harsher than the modern taste would approve, still, doubtless, great musical effects were often produced. Take, for example, the singing of the one hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm. In this Psalm the people were invited to praise Jehovah

* 2 Chron. v. 12-14.

as the God of Nature, and as the Deliverer, Guide, and Provider of Israel. At the close of every verse there is the regular recurrence of a burden or refrain—‘for His mercy endureth forever’—which was sung by all the people in chorus. What could be more sublime than those majestic responses? In clear, sweet, cultivated tones, the Levite choir chant, ‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,’ when instantly rises from the surging mass, like the voice of many waters, the commingled notes of priests, Levites, people—vocal and instrumental—‘FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER!’ With diminished volume again the Levite choir is heard: ‘O give thanks to the God of gods,’ when the firmament again resounds with the same multitudinous refrain—‘FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER!’ And so on in reply to each separate summons—

“ ‘O give thanks to the Lord of lords;

“ ‘*For His mercy endureth forever!*

“ ‘To Him who alone doeth great wonders;

“ ‘*For His mercy endureth forever!*

“ ‘To Him that by wisdom made the heavens;

“ ‘*For His mercy endureth forever!*

until twenty-six times, in answer to as many distinct calls, the throng have sent up that shout; and every nerve is thrilling, and every soul is borne onward and upward on the tide of song toward the Infinite Being whose perfections and mercies are so meetly celebrated.” *

* Rev. J. R. Scott.

The account of the Babylonish captivity forms a mournful chapter in Jewish history. During their exile the distress of the pious Hebrews was generally too great to admit of their singing the songs of Zion. We may suppose, however, that they occasionally recovered their spirits sufficiently to engage for a short time in this enlivening exercise. A most affecting picture of a company of these devoted captives is drawn by the Psalmist. The day's toils and sufferings are ended, and they have assembled on the bank of some stream, perhaps the Euphrates—"the river of willows." They have taken with them their musical instruments, and are followed by some of their oppressors. These taskmasters desire to hear the delightful music for which the Hebrews were, no doubt, famed. The request is, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." The Israelites commence an old, familiar temple hymn, but sad memories of Judea and Jerusalem pass like dark waters over their souls. Their hearts are filled with sorrow and their eyes with tears; their voices falter and their fingers tremble along the harp-strings, as they call to mind the former magnificence of the sacred city, the towers and bulwarks of Salem, and the frequent opportunities they once enjoyed of going up with the multitude to worship the Lord and to behold His beauty in the sanctuary. Jerusalem—"beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth"—has been laid waste. The holy

house of the Lord is in ruins, and the sacred hill is profaned by the idolatrous heathen. This sorrowful band of brethren may never live to see the year of release: they may never again gaze upon the vine-clad hills of their native land, nor walk the streets of the city of their solemnities. Hence the captive Psalmist says:

“ By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down,
Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.
We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song;
And they that wasted us required of us mirth,
Saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
If I do not remember thee,
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth;
If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

Let us now turn to the bright side of the picture. These peeled, scattered and disconsolate Israelites hail with transport the expiration of their term of bondage. The days of their mourning are ended, and they commemorate their deliverance in an ode, every syllable of which is burdened with joy. The edict of emancipation has been published by Cyrus, and these pious patriots are on their homeward march. Hear the jubilant notes of their pilgrim song:

“ When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the heathen,
'The Lord hath done great things for them.'
The Lord hath done great things for us,
Whereof we are glad."

We scarcely need to be reminded that the reconstructed city was surrounded by massive walls and graced with another temple. Of course the stated services were re-established, and, as has already been intimated, were kept up with more or less regularity until the inauguration of the Gospel dispensation.

It should be here noted that the faithful captives not only returned with singing to Jerusalem, but that the voice of praise was heard at the laying of the corner-stone of the second temple. It is said that "When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because He is good, for His mercy endureth forever toward Israel." *

What a scene was that! The musicians singing and playing on instruments and the multitude shouting for joy, while many of the "ancient men" wept aloud in view of the contemplated

inferiority of this temple to the one in which they had formerly worshiped.

We read, also, that the Israelites "kept the dedication of this house of God with joy." Ezra and Nehemiah attached as much importance to sacred music as David had done in his day, and, therefore, they not only "set the priests in their divisions," but also "the Levites in their courses for the service of God."

From our last stand-point we travel down the stream of time, and for ages we gaze with tearful eye upon the barrenness and wickedness, and also upon the sufferings, of the Jewish Church. But the eclipse has at no time been total, and we finally hail the advent of the long-promised Messiah as the radiance of the magnificent sun streaming through rent clouds on the evening of a long and stormy day.

Now we see the humble shepherds as they watch their flocks by night. They experience a painful surprise as the angel of the Lord appears, and as the glory of the Lord shines round about them. But their apprehensions of danger are put to flight as the heavenly messenger, with silvery voice, pronounces the words: "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

But the news is too good to be told only in plain

words of prose, it must also be proclaimed in the sweetest strains of celestial song. Behold! a happy and shining multitude from the skies form a glowing canopy above the heads of the enraptured shepherds, and the glad song—the natal hymn of the Redeemer—rises, and rolls, and reverberates:

“Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good will toward men!”

We may suppose that the mission of the Son of God to earth caused a grand jubilee in heaven, and that these seraphic choristers turned for a time from the throne of the King of kings to bear the thrilling tidings to abject man. Hence the poet:

“In heaven the rapt’rous song began,
And sweet seraphic fire
Through all the shining legions ran,
And strung and tuned the lyre.

Swift through the vast expanse it flew,
And loud the echo rolled;
The theme, the song, the joy was new,
’Twas more than heaven could hold.

Down through the portals of the sky
Th’ impetuous torrent ran,
And angels flew with eager joy
To bear the news to man.”

The Redeemer tabernacles among men for thirty-three years, and now the Man of Sorrows—the Lord of glory—is to be crucified. It is night, and the Master and His disciples are in a large upper room

in the city of Jerusalem. The feast of the Passover has been celebrated for the last time by them, and the Lord's Supper has been instituted. Each one of the little sorrowing band has partaken of the bread and wine, and the Savior utters the consoling words: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Then, "When they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."

The Paschal Psalms, or the Psalms composing the great Hallel or chant which the Jews used at the close of the Passover, were from the one hundred and thirteenth to the one hundred and eighteenth, inclusive. This Hallel was not all sung at once, but in parts, the last of which was sung at the close of the Passover. It is probable that the hymn sung by Christ and His disciples on the eve of their departure for Mount Olivet embraced the one hundred and eighteenth, which evidently refers to the Messiah. The words are exceedingly appropriate to the occasion, especially if we consider the Lord and His eleven faithful followers as turning away from their present griefs to contemplate the goodness of God in redemption, the triumphant resurrection of the Crucified, and the unspeakable blessings conferred upon man through the Atonement.

The one hundred and seventeenth Psalm is

a most beautiful and stirring prelude to this Paschal song:

“ O praise the Lord, all ye nations !
Praise Him, all ye people !
For His merciful kindness is great toward us ;
And the truth of the Lord endureth forever.
Praise ye the Lord.”

Then the one hundred and eighteenth :

“ O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good ;
Because His mercy endureth forever.
Let Israel now say,
That His mercy endureth forever.
Let the house of Aaron now say,
That His mercy endureth forever.
Let them now that fear the Lord say,
That His mercy endureth forever,” etc.

How significant are some of the allusions in this Psalm, such as : “ Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar.” If Christ and the apostles could sing in view of this sad scene, how much more should we rejoice and give thanks when we are assured that the illustrious Victim has, indeed, suffered and died, and that the God-man, having broken these cords asunder, has ascended triumphantly to heaven, where He ever liveth to make intercessions for us. Can we individually adopt the language of this same memorable Psalm and sing from the heart :

“ The Lord is my strength and song,
And is become my salvation ? ”

Let saints on earth and in heaven unite in the grand doxology with which the Psalm closes:

“Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee:
Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee.
O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good;
For His mercy endureth forever.”

Memorable, indeed, is the first century of the Christian era. The Son of God lives, dies, rises, and ascends to heaven. The day of Pentecost dawns: the old dispensation expires; the new dispensation begins. The shadows are dispersed by the rising Sun of Righteousness. The cumbrous and typical services prescribed by the ceremonial law of Moses are succeeded by the simple and spiritual worship which Christianity enjoins. The apostles, having been “endued with power from on high,” go forth preaching in obedience to the Divine command. Has the Church had her hymns of praise during the darker ages of her existence, and will she have no songs to sing on this the brightest and best day that the world has seen since the fall? We turn to the precepts and practice of those holy men, who having seen Christ, preached Him to the world.

They established churches in various parts of Asia, “beginning at Jerusalem.” At length “a man of Macedonia” appeared to St. Paul in a vision and called him to Europe. Paul and Silas went to the heathen city, Philippi, and preached.

Paul also cast the evil spirit out of a female servant who "brought her masters much gain by sooth-saying." They stirred up the wrath of the populace; a mob was raised; the magistrates tore off the clothes of these persecuted saints; "many stripes" were inflicted upon them; they were thrust into the inner prison, and their feet were made fast in the stocks. Sad spectacle! These men are far away from kindred and friends, confined in a loathsome dungeon, in the most uneasy posture imaginable. They are clad in rags; hungry and faint from the loss of blood, which still oozes from their lacerated bodies. But "at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God: and the prisoners heard them." How sweet were these "songs in the night!" How refreshing to the drooping spirits of these faithful disciples of Christ! How acceptable to Him who before all temples prefers the devout, believing heart! What strange sounds to be heard in a heathen prison! How many hearts indurated with crime were charmed by these songs, and, in some measure, prepared for the reception of the Gospel! The first Redemption hymn heard on European soil has now been sung: the last one will mingle its melody with the echoes of the resurrection trumpet.

As to the words used by these pious sufferers, of course we have no definite information. We know, however, that they were well acquainted with the Book of Psalms, and from that great

magazine of sacred poetry they may have drawn the material of their songs. They may have sung:

“ And the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord,
For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary,
From heaven did the Lord behold the earth;
To hear the groaning of the prisoner,
To loose those that are appointed to death,
To declare the name of the Lord in Zion,
And His praise in Jerusalem;
When the people are gathered together
And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.”

In various passages in the Apostolic Epistles singing is recognized as a component part of Divine worship. To the Corinthians St. Paul says: “I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

To the Ephesians he says: “Be filled with the Spirit! speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

To the Colossians he says: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

A few years after these words were written, St. John the divine was banished to the Isle of Patmos, “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” But God was with him during

his exile on that lonely island in the midst of the Ægean Sea, and favored him with enrapturing views of the latter-day glory of the Church and of the heavenly world. How charmingly did the songs of the redeemed fall upon his ears! He says: "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments. . . . And again they said, Alleluia. . . . And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

We have now reached the last page of the inspired volume. Of course we have given only a general view of the Divine teachings on the subject under consideration, without attempting to notice all that is said in regard to it. We pause a moment to retrospect the hallowed ground over which we have traveled. And, in the review, we can not fail to perceive at least one great truth which stands out in bold relief, both in the Old Testament and in the New—*i. e.*, that SINGING IS AN ELEMENT OF DIVINE WORSHIP, and that it should be conducted with that solemnity, fervor, and spirituality which should ever characterize devotional services. It was kept up in the Church

from a very early period in the world's history down to the close of the Apostolic day. The last of the inspired writers give no intimation that the service of song is to be temporary; but, on the contrary, they enjoin its observance, and give explicit directions in reference to the spirit in which it is to be conducted. This department of worship was instituted by God himself, as was also the reading of the Scriptures, prayer, and preaching; and never having been abrogated, it remains to be perpetuated to the end of time.

How strange that in the light of the Scriptures, so clear and strong, any one should conclude that the days of sacred song have long since passed away! It is gratifying to observe, however, that nearly all the branches of the Christian Church, however they may differ on other points, recognize singing as a part of Divine worship.

Against this almost unanimous testimony of the Churches, the Society of Friends utter their decided protest. But this is not remarkable when we consider that they reject the ordinance of baptism in the face of the great commission, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, enjoined as it is by the positive command of the Master.

Let us, then, give heed to the inspired teachings. Let all the members of the Church militant raise their voices in praise to the great "Captain of our salvation," and to these sublime and stirring notes let the "sacramental host" march on triumphantly to the conquest of the world.

PART FIRST.

SINGING IN PRIVATE DEVOTION.

Religion should be made a Personal Matter — Singing should have a place in Private Devotion — David and the other Psalmists — The Devout Laborer — Numerous Occasions of Gratitude and Praise — “O, Weep not for the Joys that Fade” — Death, only, considered Inexorable by the Ancient Grecians — The Albigensian Christians — Margaret Wilson — Charles Wesley — John Wesley — The Little Girl in the far Southwest — Bishop Capers — The Rev. M. L. Hoge, D. D. — The Rev. W. G. Caples.

“ In ev’ry joy that crowns my days,
In ev’ry pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.”

We would emphasize the familiar truism, that religion should be made a personal matter. The Gospel addresses itself to individuals. Every member of the human family is personally guilty. Every one is exposed to wrath. Every one has been redeemed, and may be saved by a personal trust in the merits of Christ. Hence it is said: “Enter into thy closet.” Go alone to the mercy-seat. While you attach due importance to public and social worship, see to it that you serve God

in your individual capacity. Do not lose your identity in the common mass of humanity, but sedulously cultivate a sense of your own responsibility. Pray to God in secret, and be rewarded openly. He who neglects private devotion, and looks forward to the Sabbath in the hope that, as a sponge, it will wipe out all the sins of the week preceding, will go to the sanctuary with a cold and hard heart, and the services will be to him an irksome task. The lamp of Christian experience will soon go out if it is not trimmed and fed in secret.

Nor is there any reason why singing should not constitute an integral part of private devotion. This delightful exercise stirs the soul, quickens the believer's faith, fans the flame of love, and thus fits him for his duties, trials and enjoyments.

David, when harassed and persecuted by Saul and his allies, was sustained and soothed by the sweet influences of poetry and song. Cut off from the privileges of public worship, an exile dwelling in dens and caves of the earth, he expressed his gratitude for past mercies and his trust in God for the future, in odes the most touching and sublime. Oppressed with the cares of state, exposed to the privations and perils of the camp and the battle-field, he would, nevertheless, constantly maintain a devotional spirit. Hear the pious utterances of the "monarch minstrel" and others of the inspired Psalmists :

"I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise

shall continually be in my mouth." "Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, and with Thy honor all the day." "In God we boast all the day long, and praise Thy name forever and ever." "Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments."

The followers of Christ have often experienced how effectually the hours of solitude may be bereft of their loneliness by the uplifting of the heart to God in prayer and praise.

The devout laborer, as he goes to his daily toil, mingles his morning songs with the tuneful lays of the lark. Hear his supplicatory hymn :

" O disclose Thy lovely face,
 Quicken all my drooping powers!
Gasp my fainting soul for grace,
 As a thirsty land for showers.
Haste, my Lord, no more delay,
Come, my Savior, come away!

" Dark and cheerless is the morn,
 Unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return,
 Till Thy mercy's beams I see—
Till thou inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart."

Returning from his work at the close of the day, he lifts his voice again and sings :

" The mellow eve is gliding
 Serenely down the west;
So every care subsiding,
My soul would sink to rest.

“ The woodland hum is ringing
The daylight's gentle close;
May angels round me singing
Thus hymn my last repose.

“ The evening star has lighted
Her crystal lamp on high;
So, when in death benighted,
May hope illume the sky.

“ In golden splendor dawning,
The morrow's light shall break;
O, on the last bright morning,
May I in glory wake.”

The mother is frequently left with no companion but her little one. She looks upon the tiny form and muses with maternal solicitude upon the destiny of the young immortal. She trembles in view of the dangers and sufferings to which the loved one is incident, but disburdens her heart by a hymn of invocation and praise to the God and Father of all.

The Christian traveler is in a strange land. Strange habitations greet his vision and a strange language falls upon his ear. With a sad heart he contrasts these new sights and sounds with the familiar scenes of his native country and his childhood's home. He may never again behold the green trees and blue skies which looked down lovingly upon his youthful sports. The anxious ones whose hearts follow him in his wanderings may never hail his return. But he feels that he is about his Father's business and on his way to his Father's house. And now

“How happy is the pilgrim's lot!”

How grateful is the song which wafts his soul to the "city in the skies!"

Every pious individual finds numerous occasions for gratitude and praise, such as the change of seasons, birth-days, deliverance from danger, and the reception of special blessings. Even afflictions are designed to "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness," and hence the injunction, "Rejoice evermore: pray without ceasing: in everything give thanks."

It is to be feared that in seasons of sadness and suffering we too often lose the spirit of praise: we make our requests to God, but not with thanksgiving. Thus we fail to receive the grace we need. Amid the fiercest storm let the soul be serene. Let the Divine character be contemplated; let the memory of past blessings be vivid; let present possessions and enjoyments be appreciated; let the "exceeding great and precious promises" be implicitly relied upon, and let the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" be anticipated. Then will the chastened child of God be so filled with gratitude and hope as to become unmindful of his anguish.

"O weep not for the joys that fade
Like evening lights away;
For hopes that, like the stars decayed,
Have left their mortal day;
For clouds of sorrow will depart,
And brilliant skies be given,
And though on earth the tear may start,
Yet bliss awaits the holy heart
Amid the bowers of heaven."

How often has the spirit of the dying saint been uplifted upon the pinions of song, his own faltering notes blending with the anthems of angels!

We are informed that the ancient Grecians considered death as the only god who would neither be moved by offerings nor conquered by sacrifices and oblations; and, therefore, he was the only one to whom no altar was erected, and to whom no hymns were sung. But to the Christian death is by no means so inexorable. Gaining the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, the holy conquerer rises above "the last enemy" with grateful pæans upon his lips.

Many of the martyrs sang until they breathed their last in the flames. It is said that during the persecutions by Simon de Montfort, in the thirteenth century, one hundred and forty Albigensian Christians were engaged in singing while they marched into the fire which had been kindled to consume them.

Margaret Wilson, having been sentenced to death for her faith in Christ, was fastened to a stake in Solway Frith, between England and Scotland, to await the advancing tide. But she sang and prayed until the waves choked her voice. Many other examples might be given of the triumph of praise over the horrors of a violent death.

"Nothing," says the Rev. Richard Baxter, "comforts me more in my greatest sufferings, or seems more fit for me while I wait for death, than

singing psalms of praise to God ; nor is there any exercise in which I had rather end my life."

Charles Wesley finished his course in the eightieth year of his age. This prince of uninspired poets put his last prayer into verse. Calling his wife to his bedside, he desired her to write :

"In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a helpless worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart!
O, could I catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity!"

Beautiful and triumphant conclusion of a well spent life!

The poet-preacher dropped his harp but for a moment. He still lives; and, having reached "the city of the Great King," rejoicing in immortal youth and vigor, he continues to pour out his soul to God in love and praise.

In his eighty-eighth year John Wesley entered into rest. The sunset of his long and memorable day was gloriously peaceful. In life, sacred song was the element in which he delighted to move, and in death it diffused around him a celestial fragrance.

The day before his departure he sang that excellent hymn, composed by his brother Charles:

"All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored!
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear, our omnipotent Lord;

Who meanly in Bethlehem born,
 Didst stoop to redeem a lost race;
 Once more to Thy people return,
 And reign in Thy kingdom of grace.

“ O wouldst Thou again be made known,
 Again in Thy Spirit descend;
 And set up in each of Thine own,
 A kingdom that never shall end!
 Thou only art able to bless
 And make the glad nations obey;
 And bid the dire enmity cease,
 And bow the whole world to Thy sway.”

Later in the day he surprised the friends who wept around him by singing:

“ I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
 And when my voice is lost in death
 Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
 My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
 While life, and thought, and being last,
 Or immortality endures.”

Still later, after a brief but very fervent prayer, he raised his voice and sang two lines of the Doxology:

“ To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
 Who sweetly all agree.”

Night came on, but to the expiring, rejoicing saint there was no darkness: an eternal day dawned upon his enraptured spirit. He frequently attempted to repeat the hymn which he had sung the preceding day, but could only utter,

“ I'll praise—I'll praise.”

The next morning, with a heart full of tranquil

joy, he said to his friends, and to all sublunary things, "Farewell!"

A few years ago there lived a beautiful little girl in the far Southwest. She was almost always smiling and singing, and every one praised her for her goodness. One day she lay down upon her bed, looking very pale, and said she was very weary. Her little hands grew cold, and great drops of clammy sweat stood on her fair young brow. And then her large blue eye grew bright and sparkling, and a heavenly smile irradiated her pale features, and she exclaimed, "Music! music! O, how sweet!" Then, extending her little arms, she said: "I am coming!" Instantly the spirit took its flight, and there was another songster in the angelic choir.

"Let music charm me last on earth,
And greet me first in heaven."

On a certain occasion the late Bishop Capers was dangerously ill—in fact it was supposed that his end was near. But, with exultant faith and hope, he was ready to meet the last enemy. Having given, as he supposed, his dying charge to his sorrowing wife and children, and having bidden them farewell, he requested Mrs. Capers to write as he dictated the following couplet:

"O may I joy in all his life,
And shout the Cross in death!"

He then said, "Give me the paper; I wish to draw a line under the words, *And shout the Cross in*

death," repeating the expression several times. But the sickness was not unto death; it was several years after this that he was called to his reward. And, as he had anticipated, the Cross bore him triumphantly through the final conflict. He who took such unutterable delight in singing the praises of God on earth has assuredly gone to

"Ask an angel's lyre."

Blessed are they who, through faith, come forth from the Christian's warfare singing the victor's song!

The Rev. Moses L. Hodge, D. D., an eminently pious and gifted minister of the Presbyterian Church, died recently near Petersburg, Va. War, like a mighty earthquake, had convulsed the whole country from center to circumference, and among the last sounds that fell upon the ear of the dying Christian were the distant thunderings of artillery. But with these terrific sounds the songs of Zion mingled their melody. The morning was unusually calm and bright, and Dr. Hodge, after looking out for the last time upon its light and beauty, requested those present to sing a hymn.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,"

was sung, and the Doctor remarked: "It is enough; all that is comforting in the assurance of the Divine love and care seem to be there; nothing is

omitted." His own voice, in life, had been excellent, and when they began to sing,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!"

he could no longer remain silent, but joined with a trembling voice, imparting his whole strength and soul to the two last lines of the stanza:

"Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see Thee as Thou art
I'll praise Thee as I ought."

His face beamed anew with heavenly joy, and his voice grew fuller and deeper as he said:

"And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death!"

Adding, after a brief pause, "I know but little of music now; but soon I shall be listening to the diapason of the universe."

Soon after this he passed away to rejoice with the shining ones in his Heavenly Father's house.

The Rev. Wm. G. Caples, of the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was one of the most gifted and successful ministers in the West. While in the meridian splendor of his life and labors, he died in Glasgow, Mo., October 11, 1864, of a wound received during a contest of the Confederate and Federal forces for the occupancy of the city. Mr. Caples was not a combatant, and the wound was not intentionally inflicted. "The end of that man was peace," yea,

it was a glorious triumph over "the last enemy."

The Rev. John D. Vincil says* that, after prayer had been offered, "we all united in singing the last strains he ever heard till the music of the heavenly songsters broke upon his ear. While we sang 'I would not live alway,' with him a favorite piece, his face brightened into a glowing radiance, reminding us of the countenance of Stephen in the council when he preached his last sermon. Brother Caples attempted to join in the melody that was bearing his soul up to the place

'Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet.'

He was too weak, however, to sing, but *repeated the words* with deep feeling." When the singing was concluded, the dying Christian hero said to Mr. Vincil, with the most settled composure and sweet serenity: "My brother, my race is about run—suddenly cut short. I have unexpectedly reached the end. I shall soon be on the other shore."

Hear the sermon which the Gospel preaches to the dying believer:

"Is thy earthly house distrest?
Willing to retain its guest?
'Tis not thou, but it must die;
Fly, celestial tenant, fly!
Burst thy shackles! drop thy clay,
Sweetly breathe thy life away;
Singing to thy crown remove,
Swift of wing, and fired with love.

* Bishop Marvin's Life of Caples.

- “ Shudder not to pass the stream,
Venture all thy care on Him—
Him, whose dying love and power
Still'd its tossing, hush'd its roar.
Safe is the expanded wave,
Gentle as a summer's eve;
Not one object of His care
Ever suffered shipwreck there.
- “ See the haven full in view ;
Love divine shall bear thee through.
Trust to that propitious gale ;
Weigh thy anchor, spread thy sail.
Saints in glory, perfect made,
Wait thy passage through the shade ;
Ardent for thy coming o'er,
See, they throng the blissful shore.
- “ Mount, their transports to improve,
Join the longing choir above ;
Swiftly to their wish be given,
Kindle higher joy in heaven.
Such the prospects that arise
To the dying Christian's eyes ;
Such the glorious vista, faith
Opens through the shades of death.”

PART SECOND.

SINGING IN THE FAMILY AND IN THE SCHOOL.

CHAPTER I.

SINGING IN THE FAMILY.

Home — A Christian Home — Praise as well as Prayer should be Heard in the Habitations of the Faithful — Benefits of Household Praise — Why it is especially Beneficial to Children — We need Sacred Songs as an Offset against Bacchanalian or Ribald Songs — The Early Christians — The Westminster Assembly — Matthew Henry's Remark — The Author's Reminiscences — "Come to the Place of Prayer" — Family Choirs.

"Home, sweet home!" At home infancy is cradled, childhood is nurtured, youth is guarded, manhood is inspired, age is supported and solaced. There sickness is healed and sorrow soothed. There weariness rests and anxiety finds repose. Home is a magnet which ever attracts the heart, whether we sail on distant seas or wander in foreign climes. It is a relic of paradise—a type of heaven.

"The pilgrim's step in vain
Seeks Eden's holy ground;
But in home's holy joys, again
An Eden may be found."

This, however, can only be said of a Christian home. In this little empire love must reign with undisputed sway, or the type has but little significance. "He setteth the solitary in families," that, around the hearth-stone, affection's golden chain may sweetly link heart to heart, and all hearts to the God of love. The express design of this institution is, that the parents being holy, the children may be schooled into habits of piety. Thus the young are to be prepared for a life of usefulness and happiness, and for a joyful immortality. There should be, in some sense, a Church in every house. There are family wants and family blessings; and hence there should be family prayer and praise. In the Scriptures those families that call not upon the name of the Lord are placed in a category with the heathen; but it is said that "the house of the righteous shall stand." It is scarcely necessary to urge that the habitations of the faithful should be vocal, morning and evening, with praise as well as prayer.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High: to show forth Thy loving kindness every morning, and Thy faithfulness every night."

"Sing unto the Lord, bless His name: show forth His salvation from day to day."

This delightful exercise can not fail to elevate the aims, tranquillize the spirits, and intensify the love of parents, children and servants. We may

well suppose that angels on errands of mercy pause to listen to the songs which go up from a holy household. Yea, the God of angels hears with approbation these ascriptions of praise.

The opinion has been confidently advanced, that where there is singing at the family altar, the children are more likely to be brought under religious influences, and to become disciples of Christ at an early age, than in those families in which there is no service of song. If this be so, is not singing in family worship a matter of prime importance?

The reasons for the opinion referred to are, it would seem, conclusive. When there is singing, the child is much more apt to become a participant in the worship than when this pleasing exercise is omitted. The reading of the Scriptures and prayer are comparatively uninteresting to those who are of tender years; but singing engages the voice and enlivens the spirits, and is withal such a service as the young generally delight in. Hence it is altogether probable that impressions are made upon the susceptible heart by means of melodious sounds, which would not be made without this fascinating and influential agency.

Much stress should also be laid upon the fact that the youthful memory being exceedingly tenacious, impressions made upon the child are likely to be indelible. The great incidents in the history

of the Israelites were woven into song, and these eucharistic epics were required to be diligently taught to their children. So, in the present day, the simple doctrines and thrilling events of Christianity should be wrought into verse and imprinted upon the juvenile mind by the power of music. Truths thus inculcated will cling to the soul forever. We all know that cherished memories of home and friends are written upon the immortal mind with such enduring vividness that the record can never be effaced. But in all the reminiscences of days gone by there is nothing that so haunts the spirit as the songs to which we were accustomed in childhood.

The sweet tones of a mother's voice will live and speak in the heart long after that familiar sound has been hushed into silence. The recollection of the songs of Zion which were first heard amid the throng of worshipers in the city, or in the embowered country church, will remain in morning freshness long after the sanctuary has mouldered into ruins. We may cross oceans and wander in foreign climes; the erect frame may be bowed with the weight of years, and raven ringlets may be converted into locks of snowy whiteness; but the old home-songs heard in the distance in the still morning, or sung by ourselves in some calm hour of reflection, or by the home-circle on a winter's evening, will bring around us the friends and the scenes of other days and of far-off lands; and,

while the dim eye of age sparkles with unwonted brilliancy, the heart will beat with the buoyancy of early youth.

“ When thro’ life unblest we rove,
Losing all that made life dear,
Should some notes we used to love
In days of boyhood meet our ear,
Oh! how welcome breathes the strain!
Waking thoughts that long have slept,
Kindling former smiles again
In faded eyes that long have wept.

“ Like the gale that sighs along
Beds of oriental flowers,
Is the grateful breath of song,
That once was heard in happier hours;
Fill’d with balm, the gale sighs on,
Though the flowers have sunk in death;
So, when pleasure’s dream is gone,
Its memory lives in music’s breath.”

It is not at all improbable that the songs learned in the nursery, or around the fireside, will be used by the Holy Spirit in after years as the instrumentalities of conviction, conversion, and final salvation. On the contrary, bacchanalian or ribald songs, which are apt to be learned and used by those who are unaccustomed to religious melodies, are, in the hands of the Destroyer, a most potent means of spiritual and everlasting ruin. Shall we quietly allow this tremendous power to pass into the hands of the enemy, or shall we not eagerly

seize upon it as our lawful right, and wield it for the good of our race and the glory of God?

“ Who on the part of God will rise?

Innocent sounds recover—

Fly on the prey, and seize the prize,

Plunder the carnal lover.

“ Strip him of every moving strain,

Every melting measure;

Music in virtue's cause retain,

Rescue the holy pleasure.”

It will, doubtless, be admitted that singing as a part of family worship is by no means as generally observed as it was in former days. While in many things we have advanced, at this point we have retrograded. Suppose we were to dispense with singing in the Church, how sadly would Zion be shorn of her beauty and power! How comparatively dreary and feeble would be the services! And is not this the very effect which has been produced by the discontinuance of singing in the Church-in-the-house with which our children are especially identified?

Why should not a worshipping family sing? Have we not sufficient time to spare from secular engagements? Is the work too arduous? Is the exercise calculated to do no good? Will not the same reasons which would justify us in the habitual neglect of singing at the family altar also

justify us in dispensing with the reading of the Scriptures and prayer?

It is said of the early Christians that their family devotions consisted of the reading of the Scriptures, singing and prayer, and that this household worship was engaged in four times every day. Happy households! Their children were especially taught to sing the wonders of Redemption.

In the year 1644, the Westminster Assembly declared the singing of psalms to be a duty in which all Christians should engage, both in the congregation and in the family.

Matthew Henry says: "He who reads does well; he who reads and prays does better; but he who reads, sings and prays does best of all."

The writer well remembers the sojourn of the ministers of the Gospel at his father's house as among the happiest hours of his boyhood days; but he has no recollection of ever being present at worship under the paternal roof, which was regularly kept up morning and evening, when singing did not constitute a prominent part of the service. Let this Scriptural, time-honored custom be perpetuated. At least twice a day, let every home be gladdened with tuneful worship, and, as we see our children uniting in the service, let us

thank God that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He has perfected praise."

"Come to the place of prayer!
Ye band of loving hearts, O come and raise,
With one consent, the grateful song of praise
To Him who gives you a lot so fair.

"So in the world above,
Parents and children may meet at last,
When this their weary pilgrimage is past,
To mingle their joyful notes of love."

Wherever it can be done, family choirs should be formed and maintained. If parents and children would frequently spend the evening in singing, the most happy effects would ensue. The gay world spreads out before the young its bewitching attractions, and they are ever prone to overstep the line which separates the territory of innocent enjoyment from the enchanted ground of sinful pleasure. To enable them to resist these dangerous fascinations, let home be made an Elysium. The concord of sweet sounds, in the bower or around the fireside, will be a formidable rival to the fashionable follies of the ball-room, and to the ensnaring convivialities of the drinking-saloon. At home let music and flowers, and all other innocent and lovely things, be laid under contribution, and an influence will be exerted upon the young mind which will lead to high aspirations and noble deeds. The flowing numbers of song act as so many fleet-footed scape-goats to bear the genius

of family broils far away into the wilderness. How can parents be impatient or irascible in the midst of music? How can children be petulant or disobedient? How can servants be obstinate or rebellious? In this world, where there is so much to irritate and annoy, let us, as far as we can, make the atmosphere about us tremulous with soothing sounds.

Every family is subject to reverses and afflictions, but a musical family can scarcely be unhappy. Amid the wane of fortune and the shadows of distress, music charms the desponding heart, leading it onward to the light of sunny days which are yet to dawn.

CHAPTER II.

SINGING IN THE SCHOOL.

Music should be Taught in all our Literary Institutions — Pupils can usually learn Music with ease — General Conference Action — Bishop Andrew on the same subject — Singing in the Schools in Prussia — What Luther says — President J. M. Bonnell — Dr. Thomas Hastings — N. D. Gould — Dr. Rush Recommends Vocal Music — Horace Walpole — Instrumental Music in Female Colleges — Bishop Andrew desires Sacred Songs — Singing in the Sabbath-school — The Singing of Children — A Musical Theology for Children.

It is self-evident that the pupil should be taught, as far as possible, everything that will conduce to success in this life and to happiness in the life to come. Hence we conclude that music, whose influence is most animating and benign, should be taught in all our literary institutions.

In view of the fact that music is a beautiful and useful science, is it not strange that it has been so much neglected in this land which boasts so loudly of a high Christian civilization? And yet thousands of American youth of both sexes have passed from the nursery to the school, and thence to the college, and have graduated with the highest scholastic honors, in total ignorance of the science of music! To the *litterati* in other countries it must

appear marvelous that in many of our institutions for males, from the primary school to the most renowned university, there are no facilities afforded for the acquisition of musical knowledge. Music is not in the curriculum ; it claims no day, no hour, from the beginning to the close of the student's career : it is ignored as if not worthy of the attention of educated men.

As a science, music, of course, has its philosophy. It is at the farthest possible remove from an arbitrary blending of incoherent fragments. It has its rules and its reasons—its theory and its practice. Therefore, while it greatly enhances our usefulness and happiness, the study of the science is an excellent means of mental discipline.

Is it not manifest that, in all our schools, academies and colleges, instruction should be given in vocal music? We should certainly make the practical admission that the science which especially aids us in the worship of God is as important as the science of numbers, by which we carry on trade and increase our earthly substance. We should be as ready to eliminate arithmetic from the course of studies prescribed for the young as to omit music.

Let no one conclude that we would impose upon teachers an unreasonable burden. Very few persons are destitute of the ability to sing, and all sane persons are capable of acquiring the science of music. Every teacher who is worthy of the

name can, with proper effort, give instruction in this branch of learning as in any other department. There is no real difficulty in the way.

Let it not be supposed that the science is too abstruse to be acquired by boys and girls: the success uniformly achieved wherever due exertion has been made gives a palpable contradiction to the hypothesis. A youth of suitable age who is incapable of understanding the principles of vocal music, when simplified and explained by a competent teacher, is incapable of mastering any science whatever, and the case may be given up as hopeless.

Unlike most other studies, this is a delightful recreation rather than a work of toil and fatigue; for, while its principles are clearly developed and systematically presented to the pupil, there is an inspiration connected with the practical part which refreshes and invigorates the mind.

Nearly every one has a natural fondness for singing; but, in the case of thousands, this desire is permitted to lie dormant until it dies for want of exercise. Take any other science—chemistry, for example—and, leaving it out of the regular school and college course, trust to its being learned by chance in a few lessons given by an itinerant lecturer, or otherwise, and how many of the educated in our country would have a taste for it, or be proficient in it? We can easily account for the deplorable neglect of music which exists in

many parts of the United States and elsewhere, on the ground that the talent for it is not called into exercise in the most impressible and buoyant period of life. Daily let the school-house and the academy ring with the glad voices of the enthusiastic tyros, and there is no danger that the science will be forgotten, or fall into desuetude, in the college, or in after life.

We never can be a nation of singers until we follow the example of the Germans and enthrone music in the temple of knowledge, as we have done the other sciences. For the last few years a gratifying advance in this direction has been manifest in this country, as well in the South as in the North, but the reform is yet in its infancy.

The action of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the year 1858, on this subject, is especially gratifying and prophetic of reform. The Report of the Committee on Education, which was adopted by the Conference, is very emphatic, as will be seen by the following extract: "It is believed that vocal music could be introduced with advantage into all our primary and preparatory schools as a constant and required exercise. We rejoice to know that efforts are making in some quarters to promote this end. We trust that the Church will sustain these laudable efforts by getting up and publishing suitable music, and by every other practicable method. Surely there is no poetry more beautiful

or sublime than sacred poetry: no music better calculated to move the heart than sacred music. Is it not, then, a burning shame that it is so neglected in our Church schools? We would *most earnestly urge* all who have these educational interests under their control to look well to this matter."

Let the very important fact brought to view in the foregoing extract be carefully considered. In distinct and *very earnest* tones the voice of the Church has gone over her wide-spread territory, calling to all her members and friends, and especially to her educators, to take steps for the impartation of instruction in music in all schools under her influence.

Let us hear Bishop Andrew, of the same Church, on this subject. Speaking of the Report from which we have just quoted a paragraph, he says: "There is another subject noticed in it which demands a passing word. It is the recommendation of music as a proper part of the course of study in all our institutions of learning. We are glad that attention is called to this subject, and hope that those who direct our educational operations will give it their serious and early attention. We believe that education, properly understood, is the cultivation of all the faculties which can be made available for our improvement, mentally, morally and physically.

"Music forms an important part in the course

of instruction. In Prussia it enters into the course from the primary school up, with a view to improve the voice, and also to enable the pupils to unite in the solemn services of religion—very important objects, both of them, which we in this country too much ignore. . . . Should we not begin, even in childhood, to learn and practice the delightful lessons which shall employ our powers in all their exalted perfection in that bright world to which at last we hope to go?”

We may add that the schools in Prussia are always opened and closed with religious exercises, of which the singing of hymns forms a part. “The teachers in those schools say that they regard the singing as the most efficient means of bringing a scholar under a perfect discipline by moral influence; and that, in the case of vicious youth, the reading of the Bible and the singing of hymns are among the most efficient instruments employed for softening the hard heart and bringing the stubborn will to docility.”

Luther says: “I desire that the young, who ought to be educated in music as well as in other good arts, may have something to take the place of worldly and amorous songs, and so learn something useful and practice something virtuous.”

In the schools founded on the plan of Luther and Melancthon, nearly one-fourth part of the school hours was devoted to music. As the result of these efforts, “the hymns spread among all

classes of people, and were sung not only in the churches and schools, but also in the houses and in the workshops, in the streets and in the market-places, in the barns and in the fields."

President J. M. Bonnell, of the Wesleyan Female College, in an earnest plea for "a varied but homogeneous, universal, permanent and heart-stirring Church music," says: "Our male colleges and universities must take this matter in hand. They must place in their Faculties a chair of music. It could very properly be combined with oratory, and the incumbent be called the Professor of Vocal Culture. But that in each case would depend upon the happy accomplishment of the Professor himself. What we recommend is, that a gentleman of true scholarly attainments, accomplished in the whole science of music, able to teach and train the voice, shall be admitted to equal rank with the other Professors, and be required to instruct all the students, or so many as would avail themselves of the privilege, in the principles and practice of singing. For the sake of those who expect to become teachers, he should inculcate the true manner of inducting young pupils into a knowledge of musical notation and some skill in singing from it, and, especially, in those principles of good taste which are connected with congregational singing. . . . The educated men of the Church must come to the rescue in this matter. They must give their coun-

tenance to vocal musical culture. They must invite it, if not demand it, in the teachers of their boys' schools, and our colleges must inaugurate the movement."

Dr. Thomas Hastings, who has done so much to advance the cause of Church music in America, remarks, that "early cultivation in this art, when rightly directed, is *uniformly* successful."

N. D. Gould, Esq., one of the first teachers of juvenile music schools in this country, speaking of the difficulties with which he had to contend about forty years ago, says: "It was a new idea, and no one wished to commence the experiment. The general impression and language was, that for children to sing while young would injure their voices, their health, and take their attention from other studies; and, although to learn to sing was well enough, still it was of secondary consequence. It might be done if perfectly convenient; if not, it was just as well to omit it. Although it could be made evident that the employment was a pleasant one, useful through life, and a source of comfort when many other branches of education would cease to be useful, or even to be noticed, yet, after all the persuasion in our power, we could not succeed in obtaining a class until we resorted to the expedient of teaching the art of writing in connection with music—writing and singing alternately half an hour for two hours.

"In this way, for the sake of the writing, we col-

lected schools of about twenty-five each, at three different points, and our patrons were so well satisfied with the experiment, that after one term there was no difficulty in collecting scholars to attend to singing alone. . . . It was a well-known fact in all places, notwithstanding the fears expressed by parents that it would injure the voice and health, that the best voices and the best singers were those who belonged to musical families, who were accustomed to sing from childhood upward; and those who feared injuring the lungs did not consider how any part of the system is strengthened by constant use; and we presume the same parents never troubled themselves about the crying and screaming of their children through fear of injury to their lungs. Much less should they fear the gentle exercise of the voice to make melodious sounds. Besides, the child that loves to sing will be singing something, in some way, whether taught or not. How necessary, then, that they learn to sing understandingly! As to its diverting the mind from other studies, experience has proved the contrary. Teachers of common schools, where singing is made a part of the exercises, have universally acknowledged that the best singers were usually the best scholars in other studies."

Some years ago, in a Western city, a gentleman proposed the introduction of vocal music into the public schools; but the opposition to the measure

was general and decided. He then proposed to teach the scholars in two of the schools gratis for one year. The proposition was accepted, and four schools, instead of two, received instruction from him in singing. At the close of the year the evidence in favor of the plan was so conclusive that he was employed for the year ensuing—a liberal salary being given him—to teach in a large number of schools, and when he concluded his labors others were employed in his stead.

Dr. Rush, in his Essay on Elocution, says: "To those who have studied human nature, it will not appear paradoxical to recommend a particular attention to vocal music; its effects in civilizing the mind, and thereby preparing the young for the influence of religion and government, have so often been felt and recorded that it will be unnecessary to mention facts in favor of its usefulness."

Again, in his Essay on Female Education, Dr. Rush remarks, that "Vocal music should never be neglected in the education of a young lady in this country. . . . The exercise of the organs of the breast, by singing, contributes very much to defend them from those diseases to which they are exposed by our climate and other causes. Our German fellow-citizens are seldom affected with consumption. . . . This, I believe, is in part occasioned by the strength which their lungs acquire by exercising frequently in vocal music. Mr. Adger informed me that he had known sev-

eral instances of persons strongly disposed to consumption who were restored to health by the moderate exercise of their lungs in singing."

Horace Walpole says: "Teach your children music. You will stare at a strange notion of mine; if it appears even a mad one, do not wonder. Had I children, my utmost endeavors would be to breed them musicians. As I have no ear, nor even thought of music, the preference seems odd; and yet it is embraced on mature reflection. It is the most probable method to make them happy. It is a resource that will last them through life."

We have now heard an expression of opinion in regard to the utility of vocal music in schools, from the Church, the great reformer, the bishop, the college president, the veteran music teacher, the common school authorities, the eminent physician, and the Earl of Oxford. To these favorable and forcible utterances much more might be added, but we forbear.

The foregoing paragraphs refer particularly to vocal music. We venture a few suggestions in regard to instrumental music in female colleges. Respecting the style of music most to be desired, we take occasion to express a decided preference for that which is comparatively plain and simple. We would not decry science, nor reject artistic excellence; but we submit that what are usually called fashionable or operatic performances have

in them an excess of art, savoring of affectation, reminding us of bombast in oratory or gaudiness in apparel. A style less pretentious is more in unison with nature, sweeter and more subduing in its effects—more powerful to thrill and captivate the soul.

We think, too, that the music used should be very carefully selected. Amorous or theatrical pieces, and Ethiopian melodies—all effusions which tend to degrade the taste, enfeeble the intellect or vitiate the heart, should, of course, be promptly eschewed.

Our female colleges operating under Church auspices are pledged to guard their pupils against evil influences, and to lead them along in the straight and narrow way. Those pupils who have been destitute of religious instruction at home should here be taught “the wisdom which is from above,” while the piety of religious pupils should be carefully fostered. Vital Christianity without bigotry and proselytism, should be the motto of every institution.

It has been well said that music has a moral character independently of the poetry to which it is set. This moral character must be much more decided and influential when the sounds are made to give expression to words. Whatever sentiment is clad in the garb of poetry and music must have a remarkable potency, either for good or evil, and especially when the subject upon which it acts is

as delicate and susceptible as the opening flower. How carefully, then, should we exclude from our Christian female colleges and schools all musical publications of injurious tendency !

Doubtless quite an improvement might be made in many institutions by clearing away all the sentimental trash which may be found within their walls, and substituting instead thereof a good supply of sacred pieces. As to poetry, "there are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion;" and, as to music, there is none better fitted to charm the ear and stir the soul than that which Divine worship has hallowed.

Bishop Andrew says: "Our schools often employ some one with an unpronounceable name, who is often an infidel, or, if not thoroughly so, at least he ignores all spiritual religion, and to him we commit the musical training of our beautiful, and amiable, and sensitive, and impressible daughters. No wonder we can hardly ever get a sacred song out of one of them. We call on our daughters for music, and they cram us with a waltz, or some wild, moon-struck love ditty! Surely it is time these matters were mended; and to the Church, to the Christian schools of the country, we must look for reform."

We can not more appropriately close this chapter than by devoting a few paragraphs to the subject of music in the Sabbath-school.

It is difficult to give to the institution a thor-

oughly religious character. It is to be feared that in many of our Sabbath-schools there is a sad want of spirituality. How may the young heart be softened? How may the thoughts be directed heavenward? How may the children be impressed with the great fact that they have assembled for the express purpose of learning how to be holy and happy?

Great importance should certainly be attached to the devotional services, and, in these exercises, singing should have a prominent place. Singing, not to display the industry and tact of the teacher, nor the smartness of the scholar, but singing in which God is earnestly and reverently praised.

We have reason to believe that, in many of our Sabbath-schools, the song service only extends to two or three stanzas at the opening of the school, but few of the children sing, and but little interest is felt in the exercise. How much is lost in consequence of this indifference it is impossible to ascertain. But we are glad to know that the singing in some of our schools is such as to illustrate the beauty and utility of juvenile sacred song. There is an attractiveness, an inspiration in it that thrills the child's heart, breaks the monotony and beguiles the tedium of the ordinary routine, and brings to mind the holy employments and rapturous joys of saints and angels in heaven.

If singing should constitute a daily exercise in literary institutions, how much more should it

claim attention in the Sunday-school? We can not too forcibly urge upon all superintendents and teachers the great importance of cultivating in the youthful mind the love of sacred song. We believe that by this means many a languishing Sunday-school might be resuscitated, and that many that are in successful operation might be greatly improved as to the character of the influence exerted. If we would impart to the institution a lively, jubilant, aggressive character, we must engage the voices, charm the ears and exhilarate the souls of those who attend. Oh, for the power of song to give a new impulse to this great enterprise!

Where the children sing well, the reflex influence upon the teachers, the parents, and upon the world is most salutary. What heart has not been melted with the sweet, artless strains which proceed from the lips of childhood? At Sabbath-school festivals it is not unfrequently the case that the singing is the chief attraction. Sometimes it sounds as if a company of seraphs had come from the spirit land to give us a specimen of angelic minstrelsy. This shows what children can do when properly trained.

"There is," says Longfellow, "something exceedingly thrilling in the voices of children singing. Though their music be unskilful, yet it finds its way to the heart with wonderful celerity. Voices of cherubs are they, for they breathe of

paradise; clear, liquid tones, that flow from pure lips and innocent hearts, like the sweetest notes of a flute, or the falling of water from a fountain."

The good effect of proper attention to singing in our Sabbath-schools would soon be visible in the Church service. The children having learned many of the hymns and tunes, and having imbibed the spirit of singing, would naturally desire to join with the congregation in the service of praise; and this would have a powerful tendency to make the worship pleasant and profitable to them. Nor would it be long before the best singers would be found to be those who had been trained in the Sabbath-school. This is in fact the most successful mode of improving our Church music.

"Our best reliance," says Mr. Willis, "for the support of congregational song is, I am satisfied, that which, perhaps, might not at first suggest itself—children. Children are the future Church. But, aside from this, the earnestness of their young, fresh natures; the facility with which they learn; the pathetic innocence of their voices, and the strong appeal of their example, as well as their music, to the hearts of parents and older persons present, render them of signal service in congregational song."

Then let the children cry, Hosanna! in the temple. Give us for them a poetical, musical theology. Let the Sabbath-school be, in reality, the school

of Christ. Attune infantile voices for nobler strains in the New Jerusalem. Let the young soldiers in the army of the Lord march forth to the conflict to the inspiring notes of sacred music; and when the warfare is ended, let their victories be celebrated in the poetry and song of immortality.

PART THIRD.

SINGING IN THE WORSHIPING CONGREGATION.

SECTION I.—WHO SHOULD SING?

CHAPTER I.

ALL SHOULD SING.

The Object of Congregational Singing — Many of our Hymns are Prayers — Singing takes its stand with Preaching and Praying — Congregational Singing the Oldest Style of Music in the Christian Church — The Transition to the Clergy — Luther Restored Music to the People — Singing a part of Divine Worship — Whitefield's Preaching and the Singing — The Hibernian in the Sack at Wexford — The Tavern-keeper — Musical Works issued by the Wesleys — Rules in the Methodist Discipline — But few, comparatively, Sing — Preachers must Lead in the Reformation.

“ Lord, how delightful 'tis to see
 A *whole* assembly worship Thee!
 At once they sing, at once they pray;
 They hear of heaven and learn the way.
 I have been there, and still would go;
 'Tis like a little heaven below.”

—Watts.

In answering the question, Who should sing? let us recur to the fact that the object of congregational singing is the worship of God. The word worship, in its primary signification, gives us the

idea of worth, worthship, or worthiness. Religious worship is the act of paying Divine honors to the Supreme Being. The forms of worship are various.

All the exercises and ordinances pertaining to the Church are designed to be means of grace—media through which the soul is uplifted to God, and through which spiritual supplies are conveyed to the soul. Hence it is obvious that all the departments of Divine service should be so arranged and conducted as to conduce most directly and fully to this end. Prayer should be offered at the right time, and in the right spirit. Suitable portions of the Word should be read with becoming earnestness and solemnity. The preaching should be evangelical, plain, practical, powerful. But what of the singing? Is it less important than the other departments of Divine service? Surely not. All other forms of worship are temporary, but praise shall employ the noblest powers of saints and angels forever. That precept which is most frequently urged and reiterated in the Scriptures is the one which enjoins praise to God.

Again, many of our hymns are in reality prayers, and it has been well said that the singing of these hymns by the congregation is the highest form of prayer—prayer uttered by the combined voices of the assembly—prayer shouted to the heavens. It is manifest, therefore, that the service of song is designed to be a real power in the Church, and that all the lovers of Zion should be

most solicitous to engage in it according to the Divine will.

“Singing is a service which comes under the direct notice of both preachers and people—the ignorant and the learned. . . . It takes its stand with preaching and praying, and is one of the very staple ordinances of religion by which the soul carries on holy commerce with heaven.”*

“More than upon any other means, our religious life is dependent upon the spirituality, adequacy, and inspiration of our worship-song. The hymnology of the Church aims at the perfect expression of all that is purest and noblest in the spiritual life. If prayer expresses its lower moods of need and sorrow, praise expresses its higher moods of satisfaction and joy. Prayer seeks; praise proffers. Prayer is a beseeching and a wail; praise a worship and a pæan. Prayer asks God to come to us; praise seeks to go to God. The soul that prays falls prostrate with its face to the ground, often being in agony; the soul that praises stands with uplifted brow and transfigured countenance, ready to soar away to heaven.”†

Viewing the subject in this light, can we be at a loss for an answer to the question, Who should sing? Are we not all the workmanship of the Divine hand, subjects of the Divine government, recipients of the Divine bounty? Can any of the children of men fail to engage in any part

* Thomas Hirst.

† Rev. H. Allon.

of the worship of the Most High and be blameless?

All who have the ability to sing are most assuredly bound to do so in the best manner possible; and if there be individuals who have no ear and no voice for music, they are also required to unite in the service by making melody in their hearts to the Lord. Thus the whole congregation should unite in celebrating the praises of the triune God.

This was the practice of the Christian Church in the early ages of her history. A late writer,* treating of what he calls "the music of the people," informs us upon reliable authority that "this is the oldest style of music in the Christian Church. During the first three hundred years after Christ there was no other. The singing of the early Christians was wholly congregational. Shortly subsequent to the year 300 the first change occurred—that of responsive singing. This mode of singing was first practiced in the Syrian Churches: about the middle of the fourth century it was introduced by Flavian and Diodorus into the Eastern Churches; thence transferred, in the year 370, to the Western Churches by Ambrose, and soon came into general use under the name of the Ambrosian style of music. As this responsive singing was performed by the people, the music still retained its congregational character.

"Choir music was introduced into the Church

* Richard Storrs Willis.

in the fourth century. At this time a distinct class of persons was appointed to take charge of this part of religious worship. But the people continued, for a century or more, to enjoy, in some measure, their ancient privilege of singing together—joining occasionally in the chorus and singing the responses. . . . The clergy eventually claimed the right of performing sacred music as a privilege exclusively their own. Thus, from the people, it would seem, Church music passed, first to certain appointed officers of the Church, and from them to the clergy; and, the more effectually to exclude the people from any participation in this exercise, the singing was now in Latin.

“This entire monopoly of the music by the clergy continued until the era of the Reformation, when Luther restored, as the sacramental cup to the mouth, so music to the lips of the people.”

“From the first and Apostolic age singing was always a part of Divine service, in which the whole body of the Church joined together.”*

It is well known that the Methodist Church has uniformly uttered an emphatic voice in favor of congregational singing. The genius of Methodism requires this style of Church music.

Methodism has been happily denominated, “Christianity in earnest.” It is the second great

* Bingham.

revival of vital godliness that the world has witnessed since the days of the Apostles, as the Reformation in the sixteenth century was the first. Wesleyan Methodism deplored the degeneracy of the times. It wept over the laxity and deadness of the Establishment, and ardently longed for the simplicity, purity and power of primitive Christianity. The hearts of the great founders of Methodism having been "strangely warmed," a new song was put into their mouths. Animated by the spirit of Christ, they sang:

"O that the world might taste and see
The riches of His grace!"

The mighty power of God was manifested in various places in the conversion of penitents, and in the sanctification of believers. Societies were formed, and stated meetings were held. Persecution raged; and, driven from the churches, the people worshiped in the fields. The field preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, in the year 1739, became "the starting point of our modern religious history."

Methodism has always attached due importance to the intellectual. She claims the venerable halls and "classic shades" of the University of Oxford as the place of her nativity; and thanks God not only for holy hearts, but also for her facilities for mental culture. Nevertheless, she has always put the heart in advance, maintaining her orthodoxy by her spirituality, rather than her

spirituality by her orthodoxy. Essentially missionary in her inception and in her progress, she claims the world for her parish, and stands pledged to active, aggressive movements until all hearts are aglow with love to God and man.

With such an *esprit de corps*, could it be expected that she would march out to battle silently, or with soulless songs? Might we not rather count on hearing in the van of her armies the grandest and most stirring notes?

Go with Whitefield to Hannam Mount, at Kingswood, England. Fifteen thousand people are listening attentively and solemnly to the burning words which fall from the lips of the prince of pulpit orators. The sun shines brightly. The trees and hedges are full of people. "Hundreds after hundreds" are convicted of sin, and many of these poor colliers rejoice in a knowledge of pardon through Christ. There is joy on earth, and joy in heaven. Survey the multitude and listen to their songs. Whitefield himself says that "to behold such crowds standing together, and to hear the echo of their singing resounding over the mighty mass, suggested to him the scene of the general assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect when they shall join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven."

Go with this devoted man of God to Kennington Common in London. Besides the immense numbers who come in carriages and on horses, thirty

or forty thousand on foot gather around him. Listen to the powerful voice of the preacher. The message of mercy may be heard at the distance of a mile from the place where he stands. When the hymn is announced, hear

“ The tides of music’s golden sea,
Setting toward eternity.”

Those who are two miles off pause to listen !

Such were the scenes which the Wesleys and Whitefield witnessed in London, Bristol, Newcastle, and in many other places. The uproar of the furious mob was frequently calmed into silence by the songs of the multitude rising above the harsh dissonance of Satan’s hosts.

On the 12th of May, 1739, the corner-stone of the first Methodist Church in the world “ was laid at Bristol, England, with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.”

So generally were the Methodist tunes known that Mr. Wesley, as he traveled, frequently heard them sung or whistled by the children of Roman Catholics.

“ The Wesleyan singing was a great power to early Methodism. Charles Wesley’s hymns, with simple but effective tunes, spread everywhere among the Wesleyans ; and hundreds of hearers who cared not for the preaching were charmed to the Methodist assemblies by their music. It secured them much success among the susceptible Irish. A curious example of its power is told by

one of the Irish preachers. At Wexford the society was persecuted by Papists, and met in a closed barn. One of the persecuters had agreed to conceal himself within it beforehand, that he might open the door to his comrades after the people were assembled. He crept into a sack hard by the door. The singing commenced, but the Hibernian was so taken with the music that he thought he would hear it through before disturbing the meeting. He was so gratified that at its conclusion he thought he would hear the prayer also. But this was too powerful for him. He was seized with remorse and trembling, and roared out with such dismay as to appal the congregation, who began to believe that Satan himself was in the sack. The sack was at last pulled off of him, and disclosed the Irishman, a weeping penitent praying with all his might. He was permanently converted."

"A tavern-keeper, relishing music, went to one of the meetings merely to hear the singing. He was afraid of the preaching, and that he might not hear it, sat with his head inclined, and his fingers in his ears. But a fly lit upon his nose, and at the moment he attempted to drive it away with one of his hands, the preacher uttered with power the text: 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' The word took hold upon the publican's conscience, and he found no relief till he became a converted man."

Of course the chief charm of the early Methodist singing was to be found in its earnest, popular, congregational character. The *people* sang *well*.

God has dealt very graciously with this Church, in giving to it not only John Wesley, the theologian and ecclesiastical legislator, but also Charles Wesley, the poet and songster. Nor did the former attach less importance to devotional singing than did the Asaph of Methodism. They delighted greatly in social as well as congregational singing.

In Charles Wesley's Journal, page 100, we read of his meeting with three friends at Islington, falling into spiritual conversation, and receiving an account of the great blessing vouchsafed to one of them: then rejoicing with them in singing and prayer, and leaving the rest of the company "much stirred up to wait for the unspeakable gift."

On the 115th page he says: "We met, a troop of us, at Mr. Sims'. There was one Mrs. Harper there, who had this day received the Spirit by the hearing of faith, but feared to confess it. We sang the 'Hymn to Christ.' At the words,

"'Who for me, for me hast died,'

she burst into tears and outcries: 'I believe, I believe!' and sank down."

At page 131 we find him singing hymns on faith, when on a journey to Oxford. His conversation and prayers were blessed as the means of bring-

ing a fellow-traveler to a knowledge of the love of God.

On page 136 he says: "We were warmed by reading George Whitefield's Journal. I walked with Metcalf, etc., in great joy, wishing for a place to sing in, when a blacksmith stopped us. We turned into his house, sang a hymn, and went on our way rejoicing."

At page 162 we find him singing in the garden with a little company of like-minded ones, while the sweetness of their melody draws others to them to receive the benefit of instruction and prayer.

The Journals of the brothers abound with such entries as the foregoing, which have been taken nearly at random.

As has already been intimated, the excellency of the early Methodist singing resulted from the great importance which was attached to a personal, happy experience of Divine things; and also from the piety, and musical, and poetical talent and taste of the Wesleys, displayed in their unceasing and painstaking efforts in the department of praise.

They issued their first Hymn-book as early as 1738, the year in which they were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. Many other publications of a similar character were brought out in quick succession. In the year 1742 John Wesley issued "A Collection of Tunes set to Music, as

sung at the Foundry." A work on "The Grounds of Vocal Music" was published by him shortly afterward. Then followed, at intervals, three other publications on "Sacred Harmony." The people were urged to study the science of music, and many collections of hymns, mostly from the pen of Charles Wesley, were issued at different times. Thus the Methodists were amply supplied with a poetical liturgy, and with the means of learning to sing.

The liveliness of the Wesleyan Church music was, to a considerable extent, the result of the stirring character of the hymns. "The Methodist hymn music early took a high form of emotional expression. It could not be otherwise with a community continually stirred by religious excitement. It was also a necessity of the rapturous poetry of Charles Wesley; for, with it, a tame or commonplace music would be absurd. Handel found in the Methodist hymns a poetry worthy of his own grand genius, and he set to music those beginning:

" 'Sinners, obey the gospel word!'

" 'O Love Divine, how sweet thou art!'

" 'Rejoice! the Lord is King.'"

In the early days of Methodism, Mr. John Wesley was delighted to find that the constant and persevering efforts which had been put forth in the department of psalmody had not been in vain. Speaking of the singing of the Wesleyans, he says: "Their solemn addresses to God are not

interrupted either by the formal drawl of a parish clerk, the screaming of boys, who bawl out what they neither feel nor understand, or the unreasonable and unmeaning impertinence of a voluntary on the organ. When it is seasonable to sing praise to God, they do it with the spirit and with the understanding also; not in the miserable, scandalous doggerel of Hopkins and Sternhold, but in psalms and hymns which are both sense and poetry, such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian than a Christian to turn critic. What they sing is, therefore, a proper continuation of the spiritual and reasonable service, being selected for that end, not by a poor, humdrum wretch who can scarcely read what he drones out with such an air of importance, but by one who knows what he is about; not by a handful of wild, unawakened striplings, but by a whole serious congregation; and these not lolling at ease, or in the posture of sitting, drawling out one word after another, but all standing before God and praising him lustily and with a good courage."

In the matter of praise, as well as in other things, the Wesleys immortalized themselves as reformers. As one of its earliest and noblest achievements, Methodism furnished Great Britain with the best model of devotional singing known to the world since the time of the primitive Christians. It very far surpassed the singing of the Protestant Churches in the days of the Reformation, in the

excellence of the hymns, the suitableness of the tunes, and in the spirituality which pervaded the music.

At this point we may appropriately consider the Rules of the Methodist Churches in regard to congregational singing. We take the following question and answers from the Discipline :

“Question—How shall we guard against formality in singing?

“Answer 1. By choosing such hymns as are proper for the occasion.

“2. By not singing too much at once ; seldom more than five or six verses.

“3. By suiting the tune to the words.

“4. By often stopping short when the words are given out and asking the people, ‘Now! do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?’

“5. In all our congregations, let the people learn to sing, and use our own hymn and tune-books.

“6. Exhort every person in the congregation to sing ; not one in ten only.”

It is a little remarkable that all these directions were originally given by Mr. Wesley to his Societies, which constituted the germ of the Methodist Churches. Having been thoroughly tried on the other side of the Atlantic, they were adopted by the Conference which organized the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, at its session in the city of Baltimore, in the year 1784, and they have

received General Conference approval from that time to the present. They come down to us as venerable monuments of the wisdom, piety and zeal of the founder of Methodism, and, on account of their antiquity and intrinsic excellence, they deserve to be carefully considered and faithfully practiced.

Some of Mr. Wesley's rules have, at different times, been left out of the Discipline, and among them the one which directed the preachers to "preach frequently on the head" of congregational singing. It is to be regretted that a recommendation so eminently judicious should have disappeared from the Discipline. This fact, however, need not prevent us from acting in accordance with the advice given. Let it be borne in mind that John Wesley directs all his contemporaries and successors in the ministry to *preach frequently* on the subject of singing.

It would be difficult for the minister to find a more important theme, and one fuller of inspiration. If he turns to the Atonement itself, he will find that the subject of praise is closely connected with it. Can anything be of greater interest and concern to man than the worship of God? And is not singing recognized both in the Scriptures and in the Discipline as an integral part of Divine worship?

It is gratifying to know that prayer is a common theme of pulpit discourse. On that subject the

people are instructed, admonished, encouraged. On prayer, books, tracts and sermons have been written and widely circulated. It is the prominent topic for exhortation in the prayer-meeting from week to week. The subject of prayer, both as a privilege and a duty, has, from time immemorial, been considered of prime importance, both by the ministry and the laity.

In regard to praise, the interest manifested by preachers and people has by no means been so intense and uniform. Many of our ministers never preached a sermon on that subject. Many of the members and friends of the Church never heard or read a sermon on singing. Of course, the general subject of gratitude and thanksgiving has not been ignored; but, on the other hand, praise as a legitimate department of Divine worship has not generally been made prominent in the pulpit; and to this cause, more than to any other, perhaps, the remissness of the people may be traced.

It is a startling fact that not one-half of the members of the Protestant Churches in America unite in the "service of song in the house of the Lord." In some Churches, the singing is confined almost exclusively to the few who occupy the gallery or organ loft in the capacity of choristers. In other churches, a few of those who sit near the pulpit sing, aided by a voice here and there through the congregation. It is a fact, which no one will dispute, that there are now in the different Churches

thousands of members of both sexes who have naturally good voices, and who seldom or never attempt to unite with the people in praising God in His sanctuary. Are we not loudly called upon to do what we can to bring about a reformation? And can the laity be expected to go in advance of the ministry in this good work? If it is not the province of the pulpit to set forth the Scriptural rule on this subject, and to urge all the people to comply with it, then it will be difficult to determine the proper sphere of the preacher. Surely one sermon in each congregation every year on this interesting theme would be eminently proper. But we ought not to satisfy ourselves until we have carried our point. Sermon must succeed sermon; private conversations must give force to public exhortations, until the whole Church is fully awake to the importance of the subject. Of course, it is expected that the laity will co-operate with the ministry in promoting this much needed reform; but the "heralds of the Cross" must first summon the people to the rescue.

"All the counsel of God" must be declared. Every doctrine of the Bible must be explained; every duty must be enforced. How, then, can the ministry be blameless if the greater portion of the membership continue to neglect an integral part of Divine worship without being admonished as to their delinquency, and without being encouraged to perform a duty which would soon become a delight?

CHAPTER II.

ALL SHOULD SING—(*Continued.*)

The Great Power of Song in the Reformation — Luther — Clement Marot and Theodore Beza — Priests Sung Down by the People — Papists Imitate the Protestants — Reformation in England — Influence of Ministers — All should Sing — Dr. Olin — Bishops Coke and Asbury on Singing — George Dougherty in Charleston, S. C. — Felix Neff — What Chrysostom says — Augustin — Melvill — Luther — Cotton Mather's Remark — What McCheyne says — Furber's Remarks to Ministers — The Orator — The Ant — The Word of God — His Works.

Since the days of the Apostles we have had some forcible examples of ministerial effort in the department of song, both before and after the successful efforts of the Wesleys.

The devotion of Martin Luther to sacred song furnishes a fine example for the consideration of all ministers of the gospel.

He says: "Next to theology, it is to music that I give the highest place and the greatest honor."

"After the long night of the dark ages, the light of returning day in Germany was ushered in with song. Its approach had been heralded by song a century before this, in Bohemia, in the time of John Huss and Jerome; and even in the fourteenth century, while 'the Morning Star of the Reforma-

tion' was still visible, praise broke the silence of the waning watches in England.

"As in the morning of the long days in summer, a few woodland notes may be heard here and there in the groves in advance of the general chorus which hails the day, so there were voices before Luther, both in England and on the Continent, which anticipated the melodies of his time. But when the empire of the night was fairly broken, and this great chorister of the Reformation arose, he awoke the whole forest into harmony.

"One of the first efforts of Luther, in fulfilment of the great mission of his life, was to publish a psalm-book. Both hymns and tunes were composed mainly by himself. About sixty hymns were written by him at a time when the history of fifteen centuries could not furnish more than two hundred hymns that had been used in Christian congregations. In this great undertaking he had a twofold object—first, to restore to the people their ancient and long-lost New Testament right to the use of psalms in public worship in their own tongue; and, secondly, by the graces of verse and the charms of melody, to lodge the word of God effectually in their memory. He took care to embody in his verse the great foundation truths of the Bible, that, being sung over and over by the people, they might never be forgotten. . . . So successful was he in this endeavor that priestly influence might in vain have attempted to check

the progress of the Reformation by destroying the Bible. Its doctrines were the soul of his songs, and the songs were embalmed in the people's memory."*

About this time Clement Marot, a French poet, assisted by Theodore Beza, gave to France and Germany a collection of metrical versions from the Hebrew Psalter. These, with the productions of Luther and others, were widely circulated, and produced a powerful effect in favor of Protestantism. Luther in Germany, and Calvin at Geneva, were determined to put down the practice of antiphonal chanting, and to introduce congregational singing in its stead.

The effect of this new movement was electric: "The Scriptures, which had long been shut up in a dead language, were thus released, in part, to the understanding and heart of the worshipers, in metrical forms, which, however rude, were not so to the taste of the age. They were welcomed with unbounded enthusiasm. That cardinal principle of the Reformation, by which responsibility was individualized, was thus infused into the theory and practice of worship, and the heart of the people opened to receive it gratefully.

"France and Germany were instantly infatuated with a love of Psalm-singing. . . . The energetic hymns of Geneva exhilarated the convivial assemblies of the Calvinists; were commonly

* Rev. D. L. Furber.

heard in the streets, and accompanied the labors of the artificer. . . . They found their way to the cities of the low countries, and under their inspiration, many of the weavers and woollen manufacturers of Flanders left their looms and entered into the ministry of the gospel. German, Dutch, Bohemian, and Polish versions of the Psalms, in metre, and both French and German hymns, were soon multiplied to an almost fabulous extent. The enthusiasm of Luther in the work is well known; and the popularity of his sixty-three hymns may be inferred from the fact that spurious collections were hawked about the cities of Germany under his name. Hymns in the vernacular dialects became a power in the Reformation co-ordinate with that of the pulpit. Upon the masses of the people they were far more potent than any other uninspired productions of the press. At Augsburg, in 1551, three or four thousand singing at a time was but a trifle. The youth of the day sang them in the place of ribald songs; mothers sang them beside the cradle; journeymen and servants sang them at their labor, and marketmen in the streets, and husbandmen in the fields. At length the six thousand hymns of a single poet, Hans Sach, bore witness to the avidity of the demand and the copiousness of the supply.” *

In the year 1529 a Romish priest was preaching at Lubec, and as he was concluding, two boys

* Hymns and Choirs.

commenced singing one of Luther's hymns, when the whole assembly joined as with one voice; and if at any time any one of the priests ventured to inveigh against Luther's doctrine, the congregation would answer him, and drown his voice by singing one of Luther's hymns.

At Heidelberg the Reformation was sung into the people's hearts. Fearing the Emperor, the Elector Frederick did not suppress the saying of mass so soon as the people desired; therefore, on a certain occasion, just as the priest was about to begin the service at the high altar, a solitary voice led off in the singing of Sporatus' famous hymn, "Est ist das Heil uns kommen her." The vast assembly instantly joined, and, the Elector taking the hint, mass was said no more.

It was not by preachers nor by religious books and tracts that the Reformation was introduced into the city of Hanover, but by the hymns of Luther, which the people delighted to sing.

A contemporary of Luther says: "I doubt not that the one little hymn, 'Now rejoice, Christians, all,' (the first one that Luther published,) has brought many hundred Christians to the faith. . . . The noble, sweet language of that one little song has won their hearts, so that they could not resist the truth; and, in my opinion, the spiritual songs have contributed not a little to the spread of the gospel."

The Papists saw, with surprise and dismay, the

success which crowned these noble efforts of the Reformers, and their first impulse was to fight with the same weapons. These hymns, however, although a little altered to suit Romish views, still contained seeds of truth which promised to germinate and produce spiritual fruit. Hence, about the middle of the sixteenth century, all Papists were prohibited from singing them, and from that time the name, "psalmodist," or "psalm-singer," was applied to the Protestants, in derision. It became synonymous with Reformer, Huguenot, Calvinist, Heretic.

Congregational singing was, as has been intimated, a most potent instrumentality for the advancement of the Reformation in England. About the time the good leaven began to work in Great Britain, six thousand persons of all ages might have been heard singing the new songs at St. Paul's Cross in London, and this, it is said, was "sadly annoying to the mass-priests and the devil."

The following is the language of George Wither, who, in 1623, published a volume of "Hymns and Songs of the Church," for which he obtained a royal patent:

"The Divell is not ignorant of the power of these divine *Charmes*, that there lurks in *Poesy* an enchanting sweetness that steals into the hearts of men before they be aware; and that (the subject being Divine) it can infuse a kind of heavenly

Enthusiasm, such delight into the soule, and beget so ardent an affection unto the purity of God's Word, as it will be impossible for the most powerful *Exorcisms* to conjure out of them the love of such delicacies, but they will be unto them (as David saith) *sweeter than honey or the honey-combe*. And this secret working which verse hath is excellently expressed by our *drad Sovereigne* that now is (James I.) in a *Poem* of his long since penned:

“ ‘For verse's power is sike, it softly glides
Through secret pores, and in the senses hides,
And makes men have that gude in them imprinted,
Which by the learned work is represented.’ ”

“By reason of this power, our adversaries fear the operation of the Divine Word expressed in *numbers*; and that hath made them so bitter against our versified *Psalms*; yea (as I have heard say), they term the singing of them in our vulgar tongues, *the Witch of Heresy*.”

The power of ministers to effect a salutary change in the style and spirit of Church singing has been twice illustrated in the history of the American Churches. About the year 1720, the degeneracy was so great that but few congregations could sing more than three or four tunes, and these were sung so badly as to be intolerable to those who had any degree of musical culture. The wisest and best ministers exerted themselves to effect a reformation. Edwards, Symes

of Bradford, Mather, Wise, Stoddard, Dwight, Thatcher, Walter, Prince, Woodstock, and others, took the lead in this matter. They wrote and preached sermons on the subject, and associations of ministers were formed to further the object in view, by preparing and reading essays, and by other means. In the year 1720, Mr. Walter published his singing-book. The preface to it was signed by fourteen distinguished men, most of them ministers of the gospel, and among them two who had been college presidents. This preface called upon all "to accomplish themselves with skill to sing the songs of the Lord." *

Stern resistance was offered to these efforts for reform. Singing by note, or "regular singing," as it was called, was popish—"the old way was good enough." "The singing of two or three tunes at the same time by different portions of the congregation, either ignorantly or intentionally; or, what was no uncommon thing, the singing of some one tune, professedly, in almost as many different ways as there were voices, according to each one's caprice or fancy for embellishment, so that it sounded 'like five hundred different tunes roared out at the same time,' did not offend the blunted musical sensibilities of the age." But at length the reform was accomplished, and after ten years or more of intense excitement in the Churches,

* See Gould's History of Church Music in America.

there was "a great calm," and much spiritual prosperity.

A second period of great degeneracy in Church music in America occurred about the beginning of the present century. It was not the result of the total neglect of musical education, but was occasioned by the introduction of the "coarse, noisy tunes" of Billings.

William Billings was one of the first composers of music in America, if not the very first. He was born in New England, of humble parentage; occupation, a tanner; "deformed in person; blind in one eye; one leg shorter than the other; one arm somewhat withered; with a mind as eccentric as his person was deformed." He died in the year 1800. He had genius and energy, but was almost totally destitute of education. Although his crude compositions did much damage to the cause of congregational singing, yet such was his zeal and enthusiasm that many were aroused from their lethargy to consider the importance of music; and in this way, doubtless, much good was done.

After having been continued in use for about thirty years, the tunes of Billings were driven from the Churches, mainly through the influence of ministers of the gospel. Chief among these were Drs. Worcester, Prince, and Pierce, of Brookline, and Dr. Dana, of Newburyport. The latter, in a sermon preached at Boxford, in the year 1803, said: "Our country has been for years overflow-

ing with productions, not destitute of sprightliness, perhaps, but composed on no plan, conformed to no principles, and communicating no distinct or abiding impression — fugitive, unsubstantial things, which fill the ear and starve the mind.”

Dr. Worcester said: “The influence of psalmody in respect to religion is vastly important. Genuine psalmody tends to promote genuine religion; spurious psalmody tends to promote spurious religion. . . . How different in all respects from what it ought to be is a great part of the music in our Churches! It is low, it is trivial, it is unmeaning; or, if it has any meaning at all, it is adapted to sentiments and emotions altogether different from those of pure and elevated devotion. . . . It is a mere rhapsody of sounds, without subject, without skill, without sentiment, and without sense.”

The reaction was sudden and violent, and led to the adoption of tunes so stiff, slow, and dull that the spirit and life of singing could scarcely co-exist with them. For the last half century, however, there has been a gradual improvement in this respect, which, it is to be hoped, will be consummated by the present generation.

We have taken this little detour through Germany, France, and England, and we have called attention to the early and later history of music in some of the Churches west of the Atlantic, to

show that all should unite zealously and understandingly in singing the praises of God, and that where there is a failure to do this, there is generally power enough in the pulpit, if used with energy and prudence, to correct the evil.

It will be remembered that the Discipline, as already quoted, makes it the duty of the ministers to "exhort every person in the congregation to sing; not one in ten only." This, as we have seen, is one of the original Wesleyan rules, adopted by the American General Conference of 1784, and still a constituent part of the Discipline. Its history is suggestive. From the fact that it was inserted at so early a day, we may infer that, although the original Methodist singing was such as met the approval of even Mr. Wesley himself, yet the partial neglect of this part of Divine worship was soon observed in many places, and hence the injunction to the preachers to stir up the people. The remissness in question still prevails to a very great extent, and the preachers are still called upon to take the matter in hand.

It will be observed that only exhortation on the subject is now required. It is taken for granted that the doctrine in regard to singing is understood and admitted, and that it is only necessary to urge the people to practice what they know. This may be the case in some places, with some persons; but we apprehend that the masses need instruction

in regard to devotional singing as much as on any other subject. They certainly have not had extra facilities for obtaining knowledge in this direction. We are, therefore, disposed to give a liberal construction to the word "exhort," as it is found in the rule. It is said that John the Baptist, on a certain occasion, "preached many things in his exhortation." So, the preacher who observes this *great* point in the Discipline, and exhorts all the people to sing, repeatedly, earnestly, affectionately, will find that the best way to enforce the exhortation will be to exhibit the teachings of the Scriptures on the subject, explaining the nature of the duty to be performed, the manner and spirit in which it should be attended to, the authority by which it is enjoined, and the benefits to be derived from its observance.

The preacher is directed to "exhort *every person* in the congregation to sing." Of course, the believer should unite in rendering homage and praise to his great Creator and Benefactor.

How can he whose heart burns with love to God and man remain silent when those around him lift up their voices in the worship of the great I Am? As well might an angel stand mute before the throne when all the rest of the heavenly host are vying with each other in the loftiest songs of praise.

The penitent should sing. He should sing of his guilt, condemnation, and sorrow. He

should sing of Bethlehem, Olivet, and Calvary. And while he dwells upon the incarnation, the teachings and miracles, the unutterable love, the unparalleled sufferings, the vicarious death, the triumphant resurrection, and the ceaseless intercessions of the Son of God, his sins may be pardoned, and his mourning be turned into joy.

The unconverted, whether penitent or not, should be encouraged to unite with the congregation in singing. Stephen Olin led in the morning and evening prayers at Tabernacle Academy, in South Carolina, and by this means was convinced of sin; and there is no reason why an effect equally salutary might not be produced upon other impenitent persons through the medium of song. Let no one be silent when the name of the Most High is celebrated; but let "every person" in the congregation—saint or sinner—raise his voice in praise.

"The singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs in the congregation has been allowed by all the Churches of God in all ages (one modern society excepted) to be a part of Divine worship, and, *from its very nature*, it evidently belongs to the *whole* congregation. It would be unseemly for the minister *alone* to sing: but if it be the duty of one member of the congregation, it must be the duty of all who have voices for singing; and there are very few who may not join in the air, as it is called, all the defects of their voices being lost in the general sound. Few things can be more pleas-

ing to the Lord than a congregation with one heart and one voice praising His holy name. It is, indeed, to be feared that there is seldom a large congregation where every individual is sincere. However, all who do in sincerity desire a blessing, should strive to join in the general chorus—we mean in every part of the hymn. If one part of it be above the experience of the singer, he should adjoin a silent prayer, that the Lord may give him the grace he needs; for the Lord listens to hear what the heart speaks, and takes all as nothing if the heart be silent. Again, when his experience rises above the hymn, his secret prayer should be in behalf of that part of the congregation it suits; but, in the *proper* hymns of praise, he may throw off all reserve, for we are *all* infinitely indebted to our good God.” *

In the various departments of ministerial labor, much may be done by precept; more by example. It is important that the minister preach and exhort on the subject of singing; but, to give point and force to his teachings and entreaties, he must, if possible, himself sing, and so lead the flock into this green pasture.

By the memorable General Conference of 1784, the following question and answer were inserted in the Discipline:

“ *Question.* How shall we reform our singing?

* Bishops Coke and Asbury, in their Notes appended to the Discipline of 1796.

“*Answer.* Let all our preachers who have any knowledge in the notes improve it by learning to sing true themselves, and keeping close to Mr. Wesley’s tunes and hymns.”

Many of our brethren in the ministry have passed the age at which scientific knowledge may be acquired with ease; but the majority of them, by a little application for a year or two, might obtain a good and valuable knowledge of the principles and practice of vocal music. Many of them already have some “knowledge in the notes.” A little attention to the subject on their part would revive their taste for good singing, and would enable them to lead the people correctly and successfully in this department of worship. There is here opened to the minister a wide and inviting field of usefulness; let it be entered and assiduously cultivated. There has been committed to us by the Master a very useful talent; let it not be hidden in the earth. It is expected that the preachers will be able to sing; that they will be able to sing well, insomuch that they may lead the congregation whenever it may be necessary; and only those who *can not* sing are excused.

We would very humbly, but very earnestly, urge all ministers of the gospel to a serious consideration of the great power for good which resides in holy song. If the hearts of the people are hard, melt them by sacred melody, and you will have access to them.

On a certain occasion the Rev. Geo. Dougherty, of precious memory, entered a church in Charleston, S. C., to fill an appointment for preaching. Many of the people were greatly prejudiced against him, and his personal appearance was by no means prepossessing; but after engaging silently in prayer for a short time, he arose from his knees and commenced singing. As he proceeded, the attention of the congregation was arrested by the beautiful tune and appropriate words, sung in a smooth, clear voice; and before the conclusion of the song, many were affected to tears, opposition gave way, and the word was heard with gladness.

If you would have thoughts of business and pleasure banished from the minds of your auditors, and if you would secure them against lassitude and drowsiness, induce them all to unite heartily in the singing. There is nothing so well calculated to raise the soul above this sordid world and to plume it for its homeward flight as a spiritual participation in the service of praise. A congregation whose hearts and voices have thus been engaged, will listen with eager interest to him who, in faith, proclaims the everlasting gospel.

Singing was regarded as a powerful instrumentality for the propagation of the gospel, by Felix Neff, in his labors in the south-east of France among the high Alps; and by Eliot, in his labors in New England among the native tribes.

Chrysostom, speaking of the power of song over Christian hearts, says: "Nothing so much as this lifteth up and, as it were, wingeth the soul; so freeth it from earth and looseth it from the chains of the body; so leadeth it unto wisdom and a contempt of all earthly things."

Augustin, discoursing on the power of music on the occasion of his baptism, says: "Oh! how freely was I made to weep by these hymns and spiritual songs, transported by the voices of the congregation sweetly singing! The melody of their voices filled my ear, and Divine truth was poured into my heart. Then burned the sacred flame of devotion in my soul, and gushing tears flowed from my eyes, as well they might."

Melvill says: "When many voices join heartily in praise, it is hardly possible to remain indifferent. Every one feels this. In a congregation where few attempt to sing, how difficult it is to magnify the Lord! But who can resist the rush of many voices? Whose bosom does not swell as old and young, rich and poor mingle their tones of adoration and thankfulness?

"You may tell me there is not necessarily any religion in all this emotion. I know that; and I would not have you mistake emotion for religion. But we are creatures so constituted as to be acted on through our senses and feelings; and while emotion is not religion, it will often be a great step toward it. The man who has imbibed, so to speak,

the spirit of prayer and of praise from the surrounding assembly, is far more likely to give an attentive ear to the preached word, and to receive from it a lasting impression, than another whose natural coldness has been increased by that of the mass in which he found himself placed."

Good congregational singing is as necessary for the preacher as it is for the people. The languid drawling of a few undevout singers is not unfrequently so completely soporific in its effect upon the minister as to unfit him for the delivery of his message of glad tidings; but the inspiring strains of many voices, all blending in harmony and bespeaking the gratitude and joy of believers, charm the preacher's ear, quicken his intellectual faculties, and warm his heart. Animated by the Holy Spirit and uplifted by the song, he is admirably prepared for the great work.

"Music," says Martin Luther, "has ever been my delight. It has always excited me so as to give me a greater desire to preach."

It has been well said that God answers praise as well as prayer. This was forcibly illustrated at the dedication of the temple built by Solomon. It was not during the prayer, although it may have been to some extent in answer to it, that the Divine presence was manifested; but "it came to pass when the priests were come out of the holy place, . . . as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising

and thanking the Lord, saying, For He is good ; for His mercy endureth forever : that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord ; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud ; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God."

Doubtless, one reason why God was pleased to honor this song with an answer so direct and wonderful, was the unanimity with which it was sung and performed. The individuals composing that vast assembly were all, it would seem, devotionally engaged. "The trumpeters and singers were *as one*, to make *one sound*, to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord."

A distinguished minister in England has said that "congregational singing and united prayer always accompany a revival."

Cotton Mather said, in the year 1721: "It is remarkable that, when the kingdom of God has been making any new appearance, a mighty zeal for the singing of psalms has attended it and assisted it."

The "heavenly-minded" McCheyne said: "My dear flock, I am deeply persuaded that there will be no full, soul-filling, heart-ravishing, heart-satisfying outpouring of the Spirit of God till there be more praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. Learn, dearly beloved, to praise God heartily ; to sing with all your heart and soul in the family, and in the congregation ; then am I persuaded that God

will give His Holy Spirit to fill the house—to fill every heart in the spiritual temple.” *

“By an instinct as strong as it is infallible, the Church has always indicated a quickened life by a larger use of psalms and hymns.” †

Have you, then, under your pastoral charge a Church that is “twice dead?” Do not despond: there is power in preaching, power in prayer, power in praise. Let the law thunder its anathemas: let the promises speak in accents of love: let the throne of grace be besieged in faith; and let the house be filled with the voice of praise. If the lukewarmness of the people be such that they have no heart to sing, let the preacher, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, arouse them from their deadly slumber. Let him sing to a spirited tune the words following:

“Awake, and sing the song
Of Moses and the Lamb;
Tune every heart and every tongue
To praise the Savior’s name.

“Sing of His dying love;
Sing of His rising power;
Sing how He intercedes above
For those whose sins He bore.

“His faithfulness proclaim,
While life to you is given;
Join hands and hearts to praise His name
Till we all meet in heaven.”

Let both the minister and his congregation

* Some of the quotations in this connection are from “Hymns and Choirs.”

† Allon.

adopt the emphatic language of the Psalmist: "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs."

The effect of a little self-examination at this point may be salutary. As ministers, have we done our duty in the department of song? Have those of us who are the descendants of Wesley paid sufficient heed to our own rules? Have we, as individuals, properly appreciated this means of grace? Have we experienced in the use of it that spiritual benefit which it is so admirably fitted to confer? Have we done what we could, both in private and in public, to induce all to unite in this delightful part of Divine worship? Have we striven to make these "low grounds of sorrow" vocal with praise, so that we might have "the days of heaven upon earth?" Having seen "the morning spread upon the mountains," have we anticipated the joyful day when the far-streaming rays of the Sun of Righteousness shall illumine the pathway of those who have long dwelt in the "region and shadow of death?"

"Then shall the voice of singing
Flow joyfully along,
And hill and valley, ringing
With one triumphant song,
Proclaim the contest ended,
And Him who once was slain,
Again to earth descended,
In righteousness to reign.

“ Then from the craggy mountains
The sacred shout shall fly,
And shady vales and fountains
Shall echo the reply :
High tower and lowly dwelling
Shall send the chorus round,
The hallelujah swelling
In one eternal sound.”

The Rev. D. L. Furber says: “ Let ministers find, in the precepts of the New Testament upon the subject of praise, a duty and a privilege for all Christians ; let them consider how much this privilege has been worth to the Church in its most flourishing periods—what a help to devotion, what a means of grace, what a source of spiritual enjoyment it might now be—and they may address an appeal to the consciences and hearts of those who love the Redeemer’s kingdom, which, with the blessing of God, will not be in vain. And both ministers and Churches will be surprised to discover how greatly the services of the sanctuary are enriched by the change, and how much it will contribute to the religious benefit of men.”

Let the Christian minister consider the account which he is finally to render, and the reward which he hopes to receive ; and let him adopt the Apostolic motto, “ AS MUCH AS IN ME IS.”

But if, as has been already intimated, it is the duty of the minister to exhort “ every person ” to sing, it is the duty of the people to heed the exhortation : if he is bound to set a good example

before his people, it is their duty to follow that example. If, as a general rule, all are required to sing, then it follows that, with but few exceptions, all have the ability to sing. Duty implies feasibility. But, alas for us! in the American Churches, the dereliction is very great: the people generally do not sing. Upon all those who are remiss must rest the responsibility of this failure to comply with the Scriptural rule.

Of course impossibilities are not required: those who can not sing are exempt; but this vague idea of inability is the unfortunate anodyne which has quieted the consciences of thousands. It may be that the reader of these pages is among the number. If so, we would say—"Come and let us reason together." There is, in almost every individual, if not in all without exception, a native fondness for both melody and harmony, insomuch that we are almost ready to conclude with Shakespeare that he who has no music in himself, and is not susceptible of its charms, "is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils." This innate love of music, of which you are conscious, is presumptive evidence of ability to acquire and practice the science.

Again, you have breath, and you have power to give it an impulse, and power to vocalize it: the organs of speech and the organs of song are identical, and the fact that you have power to modulate your voice, is conclusive evidence that you are not laboring under any prime physical

defect. Singing is but little more than the prolongation of the sounds which are made in speaking.

But you have tried and failed, and your friends tell you that success in your case is impossible. Still it may be that you have never addressed yourself to this work with earnestness and perseverance. In this, as in every other branch of learning, while a few are endowed with rare gifts, and are able to pass the boundaries of mediocrity, and even to achieve distinction with comparatively little exertion; yet, with respect to the great mass of learners, untiring diligence is the only condition of success. Nature does but little more than give us the ability to improve.

How long did it take you to acquire the power of articulation? How long did it take you to learn to read correctly and impressively? If these attainments were secured only by years of assiduous application, shall we grow weary of vocal music and abandon the science because a few short lessons, and a few feeble attempts to practice what was imperfectly learned, have failed to make us accomplished musicians?

No science can be mastered in a day; no art can be practiced with ease by a novice. We have heard of a renowned orator of antiquity who declaimed every day under the point of a suspended sword to correct an ungraceful movement of the body. We have heard of one who delivered

orations on the sea shore with pebbles in his mouth that he might remedy a defect in his articulation. We have heard of the ant which, for sixty-nine times, failed to ascend the wall with its burden, but succeeded the seventieth time. So it has been, in a thousand instances, in the department of music: those who at one time almost despaired, have, by dint of energetic and continuous exertion, taken position among the best singers in the Church. Let us add to our convictions of duty as Christians a little of the old Roman firmness of purpose: *Nil Mortalibus Desperandum est.* Perseverando vinces.†* Rest assured that there is only one in thousands who can not sing; that most persons learn to sing with great facility, and that positive inability to sing can only be demonstrated by months, and perhaps we might say years, of fruitless effort.

Those who are most gifted need culture. The voice must be educated. If it is feeble, exercise will strengthen it; if it is harsh, practice will make it smooth and melodious; if it is intractable, training will bring it into subjection, and it will go "whithersoever the governor listeth;" if it is contracted and monotonous, frequent use will give it compass and variety.

The ear must be educated. Why is it that the veteran mariner in mid-ocean has around him a

* Nothing is to be despaired of by mortals.

† By perseverance we conquer.

wider horizon than the landsman who has but lately stepped on board? Why is it that the ear of the Indian can detect sounds where all is silent to him who has just entered the wilderness? Why does the voice of the untutored vocalist grate upon the ear of the experienced preceptor while the singer himself is charmed with the sound? The ready reply is, that the voice, the ear, the eye, and, in fact, all our faculties, are susceptible of tuition. We have all heard voices, naturally good voices, which, ever and anon, failed to strike the proper key with precision; they were nearly right, but sufficiently out of tune to seriously mar the music. The intonation was incorrect, *i. e.*, the voice was not formed to the notes of the scale with clearness and precision. The ear was untaught and unpracticed.

Nothing in music is so important as time. Time is measured by a slight vibration of the hand or foot; or, in the case of experienced singers, mentally, without any physical movement whatever. But it is no easy matter to keep time with precision without the aid of clock, watch, or dial; the habit must be acquired by long practice. He who despairs of success because it can not be achieved in a day or a week, is like an apprentice who abandons his trade because he can not, at once, become a master workman.

Dr. Lowell Mason, the veteran teacher and publisher of vocal music, says: "As it is with the

voice, so it is with the ear: its very best natural condition is imperfect, and needs cultivation."

The Rev. F. Freeman says: "By application and perseverance, many who, at first, were scarcely able to appreciate musical sounds, have, at length, by the aid of an instructor, arrived at very commendable perfection in the science and in its performance. It would be very difficult to find a person in the possession of the natural senses, who has not a general fondness for musical sounds: all who have this fondness—all who are capable of receiving pleasure from musical combinations, may, doubtless, improve the talent that is in them, and learn to worship God in songs of praise."

A writer in the *Christian Spectator* says: "Among the Germans and Moravians, all without exception are taught to sing: the same is true of the Indians of every tribe, and of the children of our infant schools. Having visited many of these schools in different parts of the country, we have never yet found a child who was unable to sing after he had been in the school a proper length of time. We would say, then, let every person, young and old, be encouraged to learn to sing; the duty will soon become pleasant, and the languid fire of devotion will be lighted up to a flame by the music of the skies."

In view of what has just been said, the writer congratulates his non-musical reader upon his ability to sing. Of the multitudes who throng

our American Churches from Sabbath to Sabbath, without attempting to unite in the service of praise, nearly every individual may perform the duty, and enjoy the inestimable privilege in question. He whose eye is now tracing these lines may rely upon it that the chances of his being able to sing are, against him, *one*; in his favor, *ten thousand*.

Is it so, then, that we have hitherto neglected, either totally or partially, a prominent Christian duty? Has our failure to appreciate this means of grace made us, comparatively, barren and unfruitful? Has our example exerted a deleterious influence upon others? Is it reduced almost to a certainty that our pretexts for not joining with the congregation in singing have been delusive? Do we hope ultimately to spend a happy eternity in the noble employment of praising God? By our uniting heartily and faithfully in this part of Divine worship, would the glory of God be promoted?

Then let us ask ourselves, what meaneth that Scripture which saith, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin?"

In closing our reply to the question—Who should sing?—we would listen with reverence and docility to the voice of God as uttered in His word and in His works. It is said:

"Sing unto the Lord, all the earth."

"Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him."

“Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people and praise Him in the assembly of the elders.”

“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.”

“O, praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him all ye people.”

“Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men and maidens; old men and children: let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heavens.”

“Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”

In unison with these sublime teachings is the voice of God in nature: “All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee.” Why has God so made all things that they praise Him? We are constrained to believe that He has surrounded us with myriads of preachers and exhorters, both celestial and terres-

trial, that we, hearing their voices and following their example, might "bless Him."

"Sun, moon and stars convey His praise
Round the whole earth, and never stand."

A glittering host—a countless multitude of unwearied songsters—they roll on,

"Forever singing as they shine,
'The Hand that made us is Divine.'"

Turning to the globe on which we live, we hear voices innumerable, and are constrained to acknowledge that we are urged to unite in Jehovah's praise by

"Earth, with her ten thousand tongues."

How impressive and fascinating are many of these utterances!

"The lark mounts up the sky
With unambitious song;
And bears her Maker's praise on high,
Upon her artless tongue."

The grove is vocal with the mellifluous notes of the winged warblers. The streamlet, as it hastens onward, sings softly and sweetly of Him who bids its waters flow. The waves of old Ocean rejoice to sound "the base in Nature's anthem," and rest not day nor night. The voice of Niagara is heard afar, proclaiming the majesty and glory of God.

And what shall we say of the whisperings of vernal breezes; the sighings of zephyrs; the wailings of the storm; the roar of the tornado; the peal from the overhanging cloud, and the awful

detonations of the more distant thunder? Do they not call upon us in soothing strains, as well as in terrific tones, to praise God, not only for His goodness and mercy, but also for His truth and justice?

Shall we speak of sights as well as sounds? The lily in the valley, the rose by the wayside, and the wild flower on the mountain crag, display their enameled leaves, gorgeously or delicately dyed, and emit their delicious fragrance in honor of Him whose praises we are called upon to celebrate. Green meadows, blooming gardens, bending orchards, leafy woods, and fields crowned with golden harvests, all invite us to join with glad hearts in the general song. The glory of God is displayed by the fish of the sea and the beasts of the earth; it is mirrored in every fountain, lake, and river; it is heralded by the falling rain, and it is written upon all the rocks; it is reflected by every particle of dust beneath our feet, and it is illustrated by the glowing clouds which pavilion the rising and setting sun. Every object above, beneath, around—all the Creator's works—are forever united in one grand chorus of praise to their Divine Original.

O, man! gifted with intelligence and immortality; redeemed by Christ and capable of bearing His image, can you stand mute in the midst of this universal adoration? O, woman! representative of the women-singers of the olden time—

earth's angel—expectant of celestial honors and joys—can you listen to the anthems which echo and re-echo through the world without mingling your voice in the grand and never-ceasing concert?

Warmed with holy fire, shall we not, as Christians, rather be leaders in the song? Shall we not, with the poet, go in advance, and call upon all men and all things to join us in our worship?

“ Praise ye the Lord, y' immortal choirs,
That fill the worlds above :
Praise Him who formed you with His fires,
And feeds you with His love.

“ Shine to His praise, ye crystal skies,
The floor of His abode ;
Or veil in shade your thousand eyes
Before your brighter God.

“ Thou restless globe of golden light,
Whose beams create our days,
Join with the silver queen of night
To own your borrowed rays.

“ Winds, ye shall bear His name aloud
Through the ethereal blue ;
For when His chariot is a cloud,
He makes His wheels of you.

“ Thunder and hail, and fire and storms,
The troops of His command,
Appear in all your dreadful forms,
And speak His awful hand.

“ Shout to the Lord, ye surging seas,
In your eternal roar :
Let wave to wave resound His praise,
And shore reply to shore :

- “ While monsters, sporting on the flood,
In scaly silver shine,
Speak terribly their maker, God,
And lash the foaming brine.
- “ But gentler things shall tune His name
To softer notes than these :
Young zephyrs breathing o'er the stream,
Or whispering through the trees.
- “ Wave your tall heads, ye lofty pines,
To Him that bids you grow :
Sweet clusters, bend the fruitful vines
On every thankful bough.
- “ Let the shrill birds His honors raise,
And climb the morning sky :
While grov'ling beasts attempt His praise,
In hoarser harmony.
- “ Thus while the meaner creatures sing,
Ye mortals, take the sound :
Echo the glories of your King
Through all the nations round.”

SECTION II.—HOW SHOULD WE SING?

CHAPTER I.

CHOIRS.

Definition of a Choir — Choirs obtained under the Jewish Dispensation — Choirs not Popish in their Origin — Not necessarily of Judaizing Tendency — Paid Choirs Bearing Burdens — Of the Members of the Choir — Place for the Choir — Illustrative Narrative — Putting the Singers in the Gallery — Mostly Plain Tunes should be Sung — Aelredus' Description — Singing of the Colored People in Cities — Science in Music — The Precentor — The Effect of Discord — The Choir should Lead while all Sing — Productive of Great Good.

Striving still to inculcate the great truth that all should sing, we would now call special attention to the manner in which this part of Divine worship should be conducted. It is evident that we may have the form without the power. There is often a routine of outward performances where there is no genuine worship. Hence, having been impressed with the fact that it is both our privilege and our duty to engage in the service of God, it is highly important that we ascertain how this service may be most acceptably rendered. In regard to devotional singing, several particulars claim our consideration.

We may first ask the question: Should there be a Choir in the Church? By a Choir we understand a company of singers charged with the duty of leading in the Church music. From the pertinacity and bitterness with which choirs have been opposed by some good men, it might be supposed that they are sinful *per se*—always and necessarily sinful. This, however, can not be the case; for they were allowed a place in the Church under the Jewish dispensation by Divine direction: there is nothing in the arrangement at all repugnant to the teachings of the Scriptures, either of the Old or New Testament, and they are sanctioned in this day by many of the holiest and wisest ministers and members in the various branches of the Christian Church. Choirs are evidently lawful: the question is, are they expedient?

Some may contend that inasmuch as choirs were introduced into the Church in the fourth century of the Christian era, about the commencement of the dark ages, they are Popish in their nature and tendency, and should, therefore, be rejected. But this view is manifestly incorrect. Choirs existed, as we have seen, for nearly one thousand five hundred years before the coming of Christ. They were, doubtless, instituted by Moses in the wilderness at the time the tabernacle service was established—the singers, as well as the priests and the other functionaries of the Church, being chosen from the tribe of Levi. It was the abuse of the

choir institution that disgraced the Church from the fourth to the sixteenth century. Perverted from its original design, which was to lead in the singing, the choir was made to monopolize that part of the worship. The object of this usurpation was, of course, the aggrandizement of the clergy ; for, as was shown in a preceding chapter, they ultimately claimed the privilege of conducting the Church music to the entire exclusion of the laity.

But if choirs have not necessarily a papal savor, some may suppose that, being of Jewish origin, they are not admissible under the gospel dispensation. But it must be remembered that, under the Mosaic dispensation, some things, as the offering of sacrifices, were designed to be typical of good things to come, and were, in the nature of the case, transient : other services enjoined by the law, as singing and prayer, being parts of Divine worship, were obviously designed to be permanent. The music of the Temple, if typical at all, was emblematical of the songs of saints and angels in heaven ; and of this symbol, we in these latter times have as much need as the people had previous to the advent of the Messiah. The peculiar office of the choir must still be filled, either by one person or by several singers associated together ; and, if it can be done better by a company than by an individual, it is needless to say that the choir arrangement should be adopted.

Although we thus speak, we are free to admit that the opposition to choirs is, in many instances, well founded. Their tendency to monopolize the singing has been too often seen in modern times, and in Protestant congregations. An erroneous view seems to be entertained by many as to the object of Church music. Not a few seem to regard it simply as a matter of entertainment—a pleasant recreation from the more arduous portions of the service—a thing not of use but of ornament—a luxury, not a necessity. This being the case, the music must be intricate in kind and exquisite in execution; sound must predominate over sense, and the whole congregation, apart from the choir, must assume the attitude of passive listeners. The idea of worship being well nigh ignored, each one in the assembly sets himself to enjoy the occasion as best he can. Some are lolling at ease in their pews lost in reverie; some are, like Napoleon, listening to the music that it may aid them to think about other things; some are delighted with the faultless performance of a favorite piece by the choir, while very few, if any, are spiritually engaged. The persons composing the choir are manifestly prompted solely by a desire to excel in their department, and they give the same indications of thoughtlessness and worldliness that they would in a meeting for practice, or at the opera. Even the minister so demeans himself as to convince the people that he is not engaged in the act

of religious worship: he is adjusting his manuscript, turning over the leaves of the Bible, or giving directions to the sexton. During the prayer, all are quiet and apparently devout: during the preaching, all are respectful and attentive. Why, then, this utter indifference during the singing? Can such a sheer mockery be acceptable to God? Would it not be better to dispense with the music altogether than to desecrate the Church with this miserable counterfeit of true worship?

Would that this idea of singing by proxy could be, at once and forever, banished from the Church. Can we pray by proxy—repent by proxy—believe by proxy—be converted by proxy—render our account at the judgment seat of Christ by proxy? Can we go to heaven and sing there by proxy? How, then, did we ever get the idea that we might sit silently in the Church while a few friends in the gallery were so kind as to do our singing for us, thus saving us the trouble? How have we managed to get our own consent to neglect a duty positively enjoined upon us by Divine authority? How can we willingly forego one of the most exalted privileges vouchsafed to mortals?

To show how some persons think and feel on the subject of choirs and Church singing, we give the following extract from a periodical of recent date:

“There is a general idea among the Churches that the music of a paid choir costs too much; but

a congregation may as well pay their money as a choir spend their time. A volunteer choir, with any ambition to sing creditably, assume a great burden. They assume, first, the burden of always being at Church, whether they may be sick or well. They assume the expenditure of a great deal of time for rehearsals. They assume a thousand vexations. They expose themselves to the criticism of those who will not touch their burden with one of their fingers. Who blames free men and free women for refusing to become the slaves of others? We have known those who voluntarily carried the burden of the music of a Church for many years, as a Christian duty, and we give them all honor; but we have no right to ask it of them—no more right, really, than to ask a minister to give us his time for nothing and find himself. It is very pretty for a congregation to gather together and hear good singing, and not have it cost them anything; but the fact is, all good singing—all singing worthy of the house of God—costs somebody something—nay, costs somebody a great deal. Why should a choir bear the whole of this cost, and the congregation none of it?

“Those who devote their lives to music are those best calculated to perform acceptably the music of the sanctuary. We should add to this class all who, by the expenditure of abundant time and money, have become excellent in this accomplishment. To the first of these, music is the instru-

ment by which they win their livelihood; to the last, it has been a costly thing, and they deserve return. It is just as reasonable, and just as legitimate, for a man to sing God's praise for a living, as it is to preach God's truth or lead in any other department of Christian worship for a living; and a Church or a parish which shrinks from assuming its part of the burden of church music can only justify itself by the plea of poverty or constitutional meanness."

In the remarks made by this writer previous to these utterances, he assumes that in this country, at the present day, good congregational singing is not to be expected, and he attributes the efforts made in that direction to a desire to make money by the sale of music books. As the extract shows, he advocates a paid choir—a choir of professional singers, who are to be exposed to criticism in their performances as one of the burdens which they are to bear. The people are to be exempted from this burden by paying their money freely—hiring others to bear it for them. Those who constitute a voluntary choir are the slaves of the congregation, and the latter come together to *hear* good singing. Those who devote their lives to music—in the theatre, the ball-room, or the concert-hall—are to sing God's praise for a living! The Christian heart sickens at the contemplation of such anti-Scriptural, sordid, God-dishonoring views.

How different the judgment of John Wesley,

expressed in his Journal of April 8, 1787. He says: "I preached in Bethesda, Mr. Smyth's new chapel. . . . Mr. Smyth read prayers and gave out the hymns, which were sung by fifteen or twenty-five singers; the rest of the congregation listening with much attention, and with as much devotion as they would have done to an opera. But is this Christian worship? Or ought it ever to be suffered in a Christian Church?"

It must be evident that choirs organized and serving on the proxy principle can be nothing short of a moral nuisance—a grievous hindrance to the worship rather than a help.

On the other hand, let it be distinctly understood that all, whether members of the choir or not, are under the most sacred obligations to sing, and that, consequently, there are to be no inactive listeners, no critics. Let the choir lead the congregation, on the same principle that the officers in an army lead the soldiers under their command—not to supplant them, but to add to their efficiency. Constructed upon this basis, the choir arrangement may often be greatly beneficial.

Most of those who adopt this view will, doubtless, concur in the opinion that the leader of the choir should be an exemplary member of the Church. We are not now considering what would be best in an extreme case. But, ordinarily, he who is prominent in any part of the Church service ought, by all means, himself to be a devout

and spiritual worshiper. This statement sounds too much like a self-evident proposition to admit of argument. That in selecting a chief chorister, or precentor, especial reference should be had to the heart and life as well as to the head and the voice, is a sentiment that need only be uttered to produce conviction of its truth and importance.

We are also of opinion that the majority of those under the immediate direction of the leader should be pious. To associate a dozen or a score of irreligious persons together to conduct the Church singing, is a procedure which merits the most emphatic disapproval of all Christians. It would not be proper to scrutinize too rigidly the spiritual condition of those who are expected to compose the choir; but the general rule that two-thirds or three-fourths of those admitted to this responsible position must be members of the Church, could be easily enforced.

Again, the proper position for the choir is not in the gallery, but on the lower floor, the trained singers constituting a visible and integral part of the congregation. The presence of the choir in the very midst of the assembly, the tune being promptly and properly pitched and heartily sustained by a full volume of voice, would be a powerful stimulus to "all the people" to unite in the worship. "Joy is heard in the modulations of verse, and in the sweet swell and cadence of music. One reason for this is that thus our joy

may be social. The shout of one warrior animates another. The song of one laborer cheers another as well as himself in their mutual toil. The song of victory in one part of the field stimulates the combatants where the battle is yet doubtful; and the common chorus heightens the common triumph. In heaven all is social, all is action and reaction. There is song in heaven because there is joy there; joy too strong to be confined to the heart. It must not only be felt, but sung; not only sung, but sung in chorus, rising till the voice is as the voice of many waters, as the voice of a great thunder." *

"In England and in Scotland," says John Angel James, "at least among Non-conformists, the people would think themselves almost as much defrauded if they were denied the service of song in the sanctuary as they would if denied the sermon. What, for real sublimity and acceptableness to God, is the finest music performed by hired solos or the most effective choir compared with the swell of hundreds of human voices, pouring forth in one grand diapason the raptures or the sorrows of hundreds of regenerated hearts?"

The late Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, wrote to an American editor: "How is it that your country people do not sing in the house of God; but leave it to the choir to sing for them, and are thus content to perform the most exhilarating and delight-

* Rev. R. Watson.

ful portion of public worship by proxy? I confess I have often been astonished at this, and have deplored that loss of high spiritual enjoyment which our trans-Atlantic brethren are willing by reason of such a practice to suffer."

A powerful impulse must be given to the people when the choir, sitting in the midst of the assembly, act only as the acknowledged leaders in the service of song.

This arrangement, which already obtains in some Churches, would also have a happy effect upon the choir. Occupying a remote and secluded position, the temptation to listlessness and levity is frequently yielded to, especially by the young. As an illustration of this remark the following narrative is given: "Many years ago," says a writer in a New York paper, "I boarded, when very young, with a family in the South, the head of which was the organist in the Church. Not being attached to any Church or form, I sometimes attended Divine service with him, and, for convenience, sat in the organ-loft. . . . The loft was railed in, and furnished with substantial, thick, crimson curtains, which, when drawn, were sufficient to exclude vulgar eyes from the hallowed interior.

"It was customary, when the excellent ritual of devotion was gone through, and the Rector had named his text, for the singers to draw the curtains around them, and read or sleep as it suited them

best. In very warm weather they also took care to be supplied with refreshments; and thus the tedious half hour allotted to the sermon was pretty easily consumed without much weariness. I recollect that on one very warm Sabbath afternoon, the singers had *watermelons and lemonade* wherewith to console themselves; and it happened that one of the gentlemen, in handing a slice to a lady singer, overset the pitcher of lemonade. This might not have been of much consequence had the *floor* of the organ-loft been liquor-tight. But there were many chinks in it, and the lemonade trickled through pretty freely down into the broad aisle, to the discomfiture of the Rector, and such of his congregation as were wakeful enough to notice passing events ”

We need hardly say that such a scene could not have occurred but for the separation and concealment of the choir from the congregation.

“ The gallery, the modern place of performance, is altogether an innovation of later times, and Popish in its origin. That corrupt idolatry of music which prevailed in Italy, induced the admittance of persons into the choir who were obviously unfit to sit among the clergy, and therefore, were placed, like mere instruments, in a loft. There is an appearance of theatrical exhibition in this obtrusive elevation of the singers, frequently attracting the gaze of the congregation (perhaps I should say of the audience) below; who turn

their backs upon minister, altar, and everything sacred, absorbed by that which a savage would actually suppose to be the idol of worship. . . . The modern practice cuts off the clergyman from the singers, and gives to the latter an improper elevation." *

We may further suggest that the tunes sung by the choir should be mostly plain, familiar pieces. The people generally, especially in this country, have but little musical culture, and, hence, they can not be expected to unite in singing new and difficult tunes. A *penchant* for new tunes has been the bane of choirs. The indulgence of this fondness for novelty and display generally prevents the residue of the congregation from uniting in the service. The supposition that the lighter modern compositions are superior to the old Church tunes which have been in use for ages, is utterly erroneous. *Old Hundreth*, and other pieces of like character, will continue to waft the souls of the multitude upward, as on eagles' wings, till time shall be no longer.

But we would not impede the march of mind; we would not be forgetful of the excellencies of modern musical productions. New tunes should be introduced occasionally, and they should be sung so frequently that all may learn them perfectly.

* Rev. J. Jebb.

We want plain singing as well as plain tunes. Those who conduct the Church music should be free from even the semblance of affectation. Any unnaturalness of manner, whether exhibited in the movements of the body, the expression of the countenance, or the tones of the voice, is altogether intolerable. On this subject hear Aelredus, Abbot of Rivaulx, in Yorkshire, England, who died A. D. 1166:

“To what purpose serves that contraction and inflection of the voyce? This man sings a base, this a small meane, another a treble, a fourth divides and cuts asunder, as it were, certaine middle notes. One while the voyce is strained, anon it is remitted, now againe it is dashed, and then againe it is enlarged with a lowder sound. Sometimes, which is a shame to speake, it is enforced into an horse’s neighings: sometimes, the masculine vigor being laid aside, it is sharpened into the shrillnesse of a woman’s voyce; now and then it is writhed, and retorted with a certaine artificial circumvolution. Sometimes thou mayest see a man with an open mouth, not to sing, but, as it were, to breathe out his last gaspe, by shutting in his breath, and by a certaine ridiculous interception of his voyce, as it were to threaten silence, and now againe to imitate the agonies of a dying man, or the extasies of such as suffer.

“In the meantime, the whole body is stirred up and downe with certaine histrionical gestures: the

lips are wreathed, the eyes turne round, the shoulders play, and the bending of the fingers doth answer every note. And this ridiculous dissolution is called religion; and where these things are most frequently done, it is proclaimed abroad that God is there honorably served. In the meantime, the common people looke upon the gesticulations of the singers, the meretricious alternations, interchanges, and inflections of the voyces, not without derision and laughter; so that a man may thinke that they came, not to an oratory or to a house of prayer, but to a theatre; not to pray, but to gaze about them; neither is that dreadful Majesty feared before whom they stand. Thus, this Church singing, which the holy fathers have ordained that the weake might be stirred up to piety, is perverted to the use of unlawful pleasure, *i. e.*, the vanity of the singers."

We are glad to be able to affirm that the artificialities in singers which have so often excited disgust are not necessarily an indigenous growth of the choir system. And here we may ask, are there no evils besetting the old hap-hazard custom—we can not call it system?

It is a bright, serene Sabbath morning. You pass the threshold of the Church and compose yourself for the sacred services. The minister rises in the pulpit and announces the hymn. You are ready to unite in the singing, but nobody sings! Instead of a general and hearty outburst of praise, there is

“an awful pause.” It is the business of all, and yet of no one, to raise the tune. At last the preacher says, dryly and imploringly, “We will thank some friend to pitch the tune.” The eyes of all are now turned to some individual who is supposed to be skilled in music, at least sufficiently so to render assistance in this time of distress. Eventually this benevolent “friend” finds that there is no way of escape: although a very modest man, and withal less expert in the science of tune-raising than many have supposed, yet necessity is laid upon him—he must raise his head, and *face the music!* or, in other words, he must face the congregation with the music. But, alas! his trepidation has now reached the choking point, and the feeble voice which is left to him is as tremulous as that of an infirm patriarch. In his present condition, it will be a marvelously fortunate hit if he strike a tune at all. The fear is that he will do like Bishop Pierce’s “friend” in the South-West, who, however, was self-constituted. This individual essayed to act as chorister, but, unhappily, instead of leading the congregation steadily and edifyingly through the tune, he could not himself make headway—his voice “sprangled among the notes generally.”

If the tune be raised, its metre may be different from that of the hymn. A dilemma of this sort sometimes results in a complete break-down; and sometimes the determination not to be outdone is

such as to lead to the barbarous operation of crowding a common metre hymn into a short metre tune; or, of stretching common metre to the dimensions of long metre. To witness one scene of butchery like this, is enough for a lifetime, unless the nerves of the unfortunate listener be of steel.

But if the metre be right, the pitch is apt to be too low or too high; and if so, the singing will, either groan, and grovel in the dust, or scream, and strain itself upward as if ineffectually striving to grasp the topmost round of a lofty ladder. The tune, too, it is likely has been used until it is completely worn out. It must be bowed with age, or in some way disabled; for, in its earlier days, when sung by Luther, Wesley, and Asbury and his co-adjutors, it moved along buoyantly and briskly; but now, see how it limps and halts, and, in its best moods, goes only at a snail's pace.

But how can we describe the want of coherency and concord which so sadly mars the music, incorrectly so-called. The voices do not blend together—there is no flow of sound; but, some being out of tune and some in tune—some too fast and some too slow—you would almost be disposed to address the singers and say, in the language of the Apostle, "Every one of you hath a psalm."

Look over the assembly: nine-tenths of the people are silent, and those who attempt to sing are, apparently, utterly devoid of the spirit of devotion. Is this *congregational* singing? Would

such harsh drawling have pleased Asaph, or David, or Charles Wesley? Can it please God? In this connection, may we not use the words of good old John Ryland of Northampton: "Do ye call that singing? If the angels in heaven were to hear ye, they would come down and wring your necks off."

We are disposed to demur to the opinion, expressed by many, that good congregational singing may be had without either the study or practice of the science of music. To test the question, let us convene a congregation composed of persons who have never sung—never even tried to sing. Cite them to the hymn and request them to sing. Can they do it? We know they can not. They have voices, but utterly fail for want of knowledge and practice.

The singing of the colored people in our cities is frequently mentioned to show that science in music is unnecessary. And who has not been charmed with the majestic voices of these sable songsters, pouring upon the ear a torrent of melody, evidently proceeding from honest and true hearts? But we must not forget that many of these people are intelligent, and that some of them have a good theoretical knowledge of music. They have all worshiped frequently, or at least occasionally, with the white people, and have heard, from time to time, the best singing that our city Churches can afford. It may be that in this way they have

learned the tunes, and having worshiped together, perhaps every Sabbath for several years, they have had ample opportunity for practice. Therefore, their success must be attributed to "familiar science"—the principles of science practically applied. Why do not the savages in Africa sing like the colored people in Charleston, and in other Southern cities?

Science has sometimes been decried as if it were a strait-jacket, confining the limbs, and crushing the life out of the subjects to which it is applied. We need not pause to inquire how much the very persons who thus speak are indebted to science—in agriculture, manufactures, mechanics, navigation, medicine, law, politics, and in fact in all the pursuits in which men are engaged.

Order, system, or science pervades the Creator's works throughout the universe. Why, then, should science in music be despised or lightly esteemed?

The Rev. J. R. Scott says :

"Music, like every science, forms a department of God's truth. As such, it has its laws, no less fixed and unalterable than those of any other science. These laws have been ascertained and systematized, just as in the other sciences. As in chemistry, it is found, by experiment, that certain gases, combining in certain definite proportions, form water; so in music, experiment shows that to produce a given effect, sounds must follow each other according to a regular scale, in which the

notes are separated from each other by intervals, some longer, some shorter, but so mathematically exact, that notes struck together in certain combinations, invariably produce harmony; while, sounded together in other combinations, they always produce discord. Only as these laws are observed, can sounds give pleasure, or awaken any specific emotion. The same sounds given out regardless of these laws, annoy the ear, and may even cause exquisite pain. Now, as one may have considerable practical knowledge of chemistry, without being a scientific chemist; so nature, practice, and observation, may have given an individual considerable acquaintance with music, who has never been taught it scientifically. Still, it is only as the natural musician *really*, however unconsciously, conforms to the principles enunciated by science, that he can produce any desired effect. Now, since the science of music embraces all that nature and experiment have taught all men in all time hitherto about this branch of truth, it is presumable there is no one so gifted as not to be capable of increasing his skill by availing himself of instruction. The more nearly the praises of God's house are conformed to the true teachings of musical science, the more likely, other things being equal, their design will be accomplished.

“There seems to be, in the minds of many of the advocates of congregational singing, a repugnance to the idea of church music being *scientific*. But

does not this spring from a misapprehension of the term? Any music that *is* music *must* be scientific. All that science does is to teach how the Creator has constituted things; and how, according to that constitution, certain effects are to be produced. Scientific is not opposed to simple and appropriate. The peculiarities of different occasions are not overlooked. Science, truly so called, will prescribe a very different style of music for the house of God from that with which the sensibilities are plied in the temples of folly. But none the less will she aim at freedom from every violation of melody and harmony, and at bringing out as fully as possible every resource for expressing naturally and truly the sentiment sung, and for enhancing its impression on the heart. While, therefore, no one is to wait until he has made himself a scientific musician before joining in singing, is it not still the manifest duty of every one to fit himself, so far as his means will admit, for serving God in this delightful and elevating exercise the best he can—*on scientific principles?*”

Of course we do not believe it practicable for the Church in every place to enjoy the services of a choir. In many communities, especially in the more sparsely settled sections, the most that can be expected is that the people generally will improve such opportunities for the acquisition of musical knowledge as may be within their reach; and that, in Divine worship, they will sing as best

they can, some one being set apart to lead in the music. If we could speak a word in the ear of this individual, we would assure him that very much, as to the interest and profit of the service, depends upon him—that the responsibilities upon him are such as should induce him, in the fear of God, to prepare himself, as far as possible, to conduct this part of the worship. We would entreat him, in the language of inspiration, to sing unto the Lord a *new* song. That old common metre tune is good, but it has become utterly stale. As it regards short metre, the entire amount of capital on hand seems to be limited to that venerable melody which has been pressed into the service almost every time the people have assembled for worship during the last five and twenty years. In other metres the stock is correspondingly meagre. A little effort will remedy this difficulty. New tunes are abundant, and the fact that the precentor has learned one tune, is evidence of his ability to acquire as many more as may be necessary. Let the importance of the suggestion which is here kindly made be duly appreciated. While we eschew an undue degree of novelty, let us not err in the opposite direction. In music, variety is a necessity. If we had an angel to sing for us, we should want a new tune occasionally.

Let it be distinctly understood that, if we do the best we can, God will graciously accept our service. But shall we be blameless if, with the ability to do

well, we do poorly? What if a Church in any given place, comprising a numerous, wealthy, and intelligent membership, should erect and dedicate to the worship of God a rough, diminutive log cabin, instead of contributing liberally for the construction of a neat and commodious edifice? Is there no penury and covetousness in this transaction? What if the young man who has been called to preach the gospel, instead of doing his utmost to prepare himself for the great work, deliberately yields to the seductions of indolence and luxury, trusting that all necessary aid will be given him when he stands up as an ambassador for Christ, can he then exercise strong faith? Will his preaching be as effective as it would have been with suitable preparation on his part? Has he obeyed the injunction—"Study to show thyself approved unto God?" And what if, with the ability to learn to sing correctly and attractively, we bury our talent—neglect our opportunities—shall we derive the same benefit from the song-service in the Lord's house that would accrue to us under other circumstances? Can we say that, as far as we are concerned, the singing and every other exercise pertaining to the Church, is conducted "decently and in order?" In utter ignorance of the principles which must govern in all good music—without the ability even to discriminate between good and faulty singing—can we say that we sing *with the*

understanding? God will accept a mite from the poor widow, but not from the rich man. He will accept jars and discords from those who can offer him nothing better, but will He be pleased with that which is lame and imperfect from those who are in circumstances to bring a proper sacrifice? It is impossible to read those passages in the Old Testament which treat of the singers and of the leaders of song in the sanctuary, without reaching the conclusion that *good* music was contemplated. We can be satisfied with nothing short of good bread to eat, good water to drink, good raiment to wear; we want a good prayer and a good sermon. How, then, can we be indifferent in regard to the music which is to be used in the worship of our Heavenly Father?

“God has bestowed on our race, in addition to the faculty of speech, the gift of music, as a medium of communion with each other and with Himself; and has appointed it as a means of the sublimest exercises of devotion, as if with special intent that the praises in His Church on earth may approximate as nearly as possible to the spiritual and refined worship of the Church in heaven. Through the influence of music, the very senses become, as it were, hand-maidens of devotion. By the harmonious combination of a few notes, with their various modulations, the mind, through the organs of hearing, and the sympathy of the nervous system, not only receives peculiar pleasure—some-

times exquisitely refined sensations of delight—but the affections are excited to the spiritual exercises of devotion and praise; we are prepared for the more lively and ecstatic enjoyment of Divine communion, and are thus assisted in near approaches to the throne of grace:

“‘On eagle-pinions borne,
We scale the mount of God.’

“ The effect of discordant and unharmonious sounds, is a sensation of uneasiness and distress, tending to prevent, rather than aid, a spirit of devotion. Such penance we have no right to inflict on those who worship with us. Music should be cultivated for the purpose of religious worship, and from a sense of religious duty.” *

Dr. Watts says: “Of all our religious solemnities, psalmody is the most unhappily managed. The very action which should elevate us to the most Divine and delightful sensations, doth not only flatten our devotions, but too often touch all the springs of uneasiness within us.”

God requires *melody*—melody in the heart, and melody, as far as practicable, to the *ear*.

“In order that a congregation may bring its *best* offering in song, there can be no question that it needs the help and lead of a choir. A company of well-trained singers, having what good singers usually have, such a love of music as keeps them

* Freeman.

in habits of constant vocal practice, and makes that practice a pleasure, have it in their power to impart invaluable assistance to the congregation. They are able to sing with confidence. They are masters of the music which they perform. Their bold, firm, spirited tones assure the timid of support, and encourage all who can sing, even moderately well, to put forth their voices heartily. They may direct the movement of the tunes, securing promptness and precision of utterance, and preventing those dilatory habits of singing to which congregations are always liable. Their help in tunes that are not very familiar, and in learning new tunes, by which the stock of musical material in use by the congregation may be gradually enlarged, is of great importance. . . . If a congregation is so fortunate as to enjoy the services of a choir of good singers, who sing, not for display, but for worship, and who are willing to assist the humblest worshipers in the sanctuary, and even children, in making their praises vocal, the Church should by all means, and most thankfully, avail herself of such assistance.”*

Favored with the lead of a score of strong and cultivated voices, any one, however destitute of a knowledge of musical science, may unite in the singing, first softly, and then with greater assurance.

But some may contend that the choir institution

* Furber.

is a good one when under suitable *regime*, but that the difficulties to be overcome are so formidable, that it had better be dispensed with altogether. This view of the case is specious, but, as we apprehend, incorrect. We are of opinion that this branch of the Church service may be easily regulated.

If we proceed upon a wrong principle, we may expect embarrassment. If it is understood that the Church music is an affair which does not necessarily claim the attention of those who direct in ecclesiastical matters; and if a number of persons, believing that there ought to be a choir, voluntarily assume the responsibility of conducting the singing, their motives may be good, but evil, in most cases, will ensue. Having been supreme in the undertaking, at the beginning, they will, of course, expect to have the whole matter in their own hands ever afterward. Hence, if disapprobation should be expressed in regard to their performances; or, if changes should be proposed, they are likely to consider these suggestions as evidence of ingratitude for services rendered; and, in fact, as gratuitous fault-finding, or impertinent meddling. Being unwilling to submit to what they look upon as dictation, they either persist in their own way, or indignantly abandon the position which they were never authorized to occupy.

Injury has now been done to the cause of Christ,

and who is in fault? We blame the choir for their obstinacy and petulance, but we blame the Church, also, for her indifference in a matter of vital importance. Why did she not give this movement a quietus in its very inception? Nay, why did not the Church in that place, from the very day of her organization, claim the prerogative of managing her own affairs? Then no one would have thought of invading her rights.

Let it be distinctly understood, that unauthorized persons have no more right to control the singing than they have to direct in prayer or preaching. Let the pastor—the *overseer*—aided by his proper advisers, consider it his bounden duty to supervise this branch of the worship, and all other departments of the Church-service. A thousand annoyances and evils will thus be avoided.

As was intimated in a former chapter, the Methodist Discipline leaves the superintendence of the singing with the pastor. Aided by those who are capable of giving advice, he can make a judicious selection of persons to compose the choir.

We quote a Canon of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as follows: "It shall be the duty of every minister, with such assistance as he can obtain from persons skilled in music, to give order concerning the tunes to be sung at any time in his Church; and, especially, it shall be his duty to suppress all light and unseemly music, and all indecency and irreverence in the performance, by

which vain and ungodly persons profane the service of the sanctuary."

"All Church music," says Richard Storrs Willis, "it is understood, is subservient to what is assumed to be the great object of Church-service—worship. Now, the true nature of worship, the general principles which underlie it, and the best method of successfully accomplishing it, ought to be, and doubtless are, better understood by the clergyman than the musician; inasmuch as the one makes this his special study, and the other makes music his special study

"The intellectual and defining part of the musical department in Churches belongs, then, to the clergyman: the practical and applying part to the artist. In other words, to the clergyman, as the spiritual guide of the Church, it appertains, to decide what musical arrangement is best for the spiritual interests of the Church; and to the musician it appertains to realize this arrangement."

It is certainly the province of the pastor, aided by his official advisers, to decide as to the expediency of a choir; and, if there is to be one, to designate its position in the church; the persons or class of persons of whom it is to be composed; and the character of the tunes to be sung. In the same way, the question as to the introduction of instrumental music may be decided. The choir must be regarded, from first to last, as the creature of the Church, and

subject to her authority. This authority should never allow itself to be contravened, and should never be delegated to music committees, nor to any individual or association whatever.

This oversight, while it will make the choir efficient and guard it from deterioration, will by no means diminish that confidence, buoyancy, and freedom which should ever characterize those who delight in sacred song. On the contrary, no embarrassing restrictions being imposed, and the peculiar province of the singers being clearly defined, they will feel a degree of assurance and happiness which they could not otherwise experience. Merely leaders of the psalmody, they will be sustained and gladdened by the symphony of many voices, and the animated spirits of the multitude will be wafted to the skies upon the thrilling notes of the temple hymn.

Here, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter in respect to the choir: whenever it assumes to occupy an independent position, or to monopolize its department of worship, it is an intolerable evil; but it may be easily preserved from all abuses, in which case it is greatly promotive of good congregational singing, and is, consequently, an inestimable blessing to the Church and to the world.

CHAPTER II.

MELODY AND HARMONY.

Definition — Origin of Counterpoint — Harmonizing in Germany — Mr. Weber's first Objection to Harmony — His second, third, and fourth Objections — The Power of Harmony a Divine Gift — Treble should Predominate — Female Voices — Male Voices — Variety of Voice — The Music of the Spheres — Harmony in the Universe — Distinguished Advocates of Harmony.

Should we confine ourselves to the melody, or leading part of the music? Melody is one single strain of successive musical tones—a tune having but one part without any accompaniment. Harmony is the combination of two or more such strains. Hence, an air or melody is said to be harmonized when one, two, or three parts are connected with it. We sing in harmony when the bass, tenor, or alto is sung in combination with the air, or leading part, or when all these are sung together.

Melody must have preceded harmony, as, in numbers, one precedes two. The parent must exist prior to the offspring. Still, it is supposed, with good reason, that harmony was known and practiced by the ancients, both Jews and heathen. In the olden time great importance was attached to musical culture, and much attention was given to

singing and playing on instruments. It would, therefore, seem probable that by accident, if not by design, musicians would occasionally strike opposite notes at the distance of an octave, a third, or a fifth from each other, and that the agreeable effect having been discovered, efforts would be made to make the pleasing concord extend from one note to all the notes constituting a tune. This, however, is mere conjecture; there is no positive evidence either for or against the hypothesis.

Franco is the first on record who entertained the idea of *counterpoint*. "Musical notation," says a writer in the London Encyclopedia, "was at one time performed by small points; and the present mode is only an improvement on that practice. Counterpoint—*contra punctum*—therefore, denotes the notation of harmony, or music in parts, by points opposite to each other."

The singing at the dawn of the Reformation in Germany was confined to the melody alone; but about the year 1563, many of the plain tunes were harmonized by competent composers. This style of composition was by no means designed to take the place of the usual mode of singing. It was intended to give variety to the music, while all who desired to do so were at liberty to sing the air as lustily as they pleased.

We are not disposed to take extreme ground in favor of harmony. It is certainly appropriate in amateur singing, whether in the social circle or

at the public concert; but when considered with reference to a worshipping assembly, it must be subjected to some limitations. It is desirable that congregational singing should be strong; therefore, when there are but few present, it may be well to concentrate the forces upon the melody.

If it be contended that the aggregate of strength is the same, whether we sing in unison or in parts, the reply is that the air being the leading part, it must march along with bold and vigorous step; weakness here is failure.

But, ordinarily, congregations convened for public worship are large, and, when this is the case, harmony may often be employed to great advantage. We are aware, however, that some entertain a different opinion. Among these is Mr. Henry Weber, who formerly held the position of Government Teacher of Music in Germany. In the *Home Circle*, he gives four reasons in favor of melody to the exclusion of harmony, or singing in parts. Mr. Weber being an eminent musician, we may safely conclude that he has given us, in these four items, the strength of the opposition to harmony in congregational singing. He says:

“The melody is the only part which gives the exact expression to the words, and we can not see why a portion of the congregation should be deprived of the privilege of singing that strain.”

We may venture to inquire if our author has premised correctly. Is the position incontrovert-

ible that "the melody is the only part which gives the exact expression to the words?" A good singer will articulate no less distinctly when he sings the subordinate parts than when he sings the air. It is not only possible, but it is a necessity in good music that, in all the parts, every syllable be uttered clearly. If, then, every sound in every word is brought out with precision, how can it be said that exact expression is not given to the poetry?

But it may be said that expression includes also that peculiar pitch and modulation of voice which give point and power to the sentiments expressed.

Suppose, then, that we sing the hymns commencing,

"Father, I stretch my hands to Thee,"

"O, for a closer walk with God,"

or any other words of a sad or pathetic cast, may not the solemn bass, or the pensive, aerial warbling of the alto, be better adapted to give expression to the hymn than even the melody itself?

We are speaking now, however, not of a solo, but of congregational singing; and we must not single out one part or one voice: we must take all the parts and all the voices in the aggregate. Listen to the following words set to the tune called *Boylston*:

"The pity of the Lord,
To those that fear His name,
Is such as tender parents feel;
He knows our feeble frame."

Again, hear the congregation as they sing,

“ Forever here my rest shall be,
Close to Thy bleeding side ;
This all my hope, and all my plea,
For me the Savior died,”

set to *Mear*. How could we in either case cut off the delightful accompaniments which have long been wedded to the leading part, and send it along through the staff bare and lonely? In *Boylston*, the power and beauty of the tune reside in the bass, and the tenor constitutes the chief strength and glory of *Mear*. They are both tolerable tunes when the melody alone is sung ; but when sung with the parts, they give, as we conceive, “the exact expression to the words” with much greater felicity. And so we would say of most of the tunes used in large worshipping assemblies.

To say the least, there need be no deprivation in any case whatever ; all should be left free to sing the air, or one of the harmonies attached to it, and no one should be subjected to embarrassment in order that the parts may be sustained.

Mr. Weber's second reason in favor of unisonous singing is as follows :

“ It would seriously affect the religious meditation of the singers to be constantly on the guard to sing correctly parts differing from the melody : although they might succeed in making an impression on the listeners, yet they would not be benefited themselves.”

Does this statement accord with the experience of those who have been engaged in carrying the parts in congregational singing? Have they of necessity been so constantly on the guard to sing correctly as seriously to affect their religious meditations? This might be a consequence of the too frequent introduction and use of new tunes; but this is what we deprecate as affecting injuriously, not only those who sing the parts, but also those who sing, or ought to sing, the air. We have no right to devote the precious moments allotted to Divine worship merely to the acquisition of musical knowledge.

It will be conceded, as a general rule, that those who sing the accompanying parts are able to read music with ordinary facility. One who can do this will easily master his part, in a plain tune, in the space of a half hour; and, with a little practice, it will become as familiar to him as the letters of the alphabet. It is understood, too, that each part has its appropriate leader, who has sufficient skill to commence the tune on the proper key. If, then, the singer knows his part perfectly, and if there is some one to give him the proper sound and conduct him along through the notes, why may he not join and sing the bass, the tenor, or the alto, with as great ease and spirituality as if he confined himself to the melody? Might it not be expected that he who sings the leading part would feel greater solicitude for the

correctness of his performance than would be felt by him who simply goes along in company? If those who sing the air deviate from the right line, they lead the whole congregation astray; while a mis-step in any of the parts could only produce momentary discord. If those who sustain the leading part should, on any account, make an untimely pause, a formidable chasm in the music is the inevitable consequence; but those who espouse the subordinate parts may be silent at any time without seriously marring the general effect of the singing. We are inclined to the opinion that any one of the accompanying parts is more easily learned than the melody, because there are so few intervals between the notes. It is vastly easier for the voice to pass over a small space than from a very low note to a very high one, or *vice versa*. We should, at all events, be so thorough in the part which we have chosen as to preclude the fear of failure.

We consider our author's third reason: "The regularity of singing in parts would be too often disturbed by the accidental absence of some members of the congregation, as sufficiently shown by the choir system."

There is nothing more susceptible of adaptation than melody and harmony. As we have intimated, we do not think it desirable that we should always essay to conduct all the parts. If circumstances seem to require it, let all sing in unison. If those

who are accustomed to lead in any given part be absent, let that part be omitted; and, if only one part besides the air can be advantageously sung, so let it be. In this way the irregularity might be made to conduce to a pleasing variety. Generally, however, the assembling of the customary congregation will insure the presence of most of those who lead in the singing.

Mr. Weber closes by saying: "The singing of one strain in unison by a large congregation is more grand and impressive than singing in parts, while singing in parts by a small assembly tends only to weaken the effect."

Congregational singing should certainly be characterized by grandeur and impressiveness; but is it absolutely certain that these are peculiarly the attributes of unisonous singing? Melody is the gift of God: He has conferred upon us both the ear and the voice, thus enabling us to make and appreciate pleasing sounds. Harmony is likewise the gift of God: He has so arranged the laws of sound that two or more notes at certain intervals from each other on the staff, when struck simultaneously, produce a delightful concord. Music was especially designed to be used in Divine worship. Now, if God has given us melody to be used in His praise, and if melody is the most simple and most easily acquired style of music; and if, for devotional purposes, it is altogether superior to harmony, is it not strange that the power of pro-

ducing harmonious sounds should ever have been conferred upon us? Melody is to a congregation of worshipers the first gift: they must sing in unison before they can sing in parts. Harmony is a subsequent gift: by study and practice the people may acquire the ability to sing several parts together with precision and ease. Now, if this latter gift be inferior to the former, why was it ever bestowed? The Omniscient Creator does nothing that is superfluous, and He generally leads us on from the less to the greater—from that which is excellent to that which is more excellent. Hence, we have first the light of the morning star, then the day-dawn, and then the sun shining in his strength. We are first babes in Christ, and in Him we are to “grow up.” Is it not unseemly and unnatural to put that which is inferior after that which is more excellent? But this, we must admit, has been done by the Creator Himself, if we contend that, in congregational worship, melody is necessarily, and at all times, superior to harmony.

We are fully of opinion that the air should always predominate: it is the king, the other parts are the subjects: it is the main stream, they are the tributaries. The melody should be sufficiently pre-eminent to be heard distinctly in every part of the house above the strains which harmonize with it: it should be sounded out, not roughly or vociferously, but with great strength

and fervor, extending, as it were, a kindly and continuous invitation to all present to participate.

Therefore, let as many as choose to do so, both male and female, concentrate their voices upon the leading part. We have never been able to see why it should be given exclusively to females. They were from the first, designed to be "help-meets." The strength of the female voice has been urged as a reason for this arrangement; but we are of opinion that, in leading the service of song, the commanding power of male voices should be preferred to feminine softness or shrillness. The blending of the two is certainly most desirable. It is generally conceded that, on account of its peculiar sharpness, the female voice is not well adapted to tenor singing, but this is not a sufficient reason for granting it a monopoly of the air or melody. The finer sex may well employ their voices upon it and the alto, and the males may sing the air, the bass, or the tenor.

A professor in a Southern college says: "In the congregation, it is the male voices that give body and force to the tide of sound. Deprived of these, no matter how sweetly the women may sing, there is no power exerted over the multitude. In the full chorus of the camp-meeting or in meetings of the colored people, it is the hearty men's voices, sustaining the higher voices of the females, that give the singing its peculiar and oft-acknowledged charm."

The foregoing views may be embraced, of course, without the slightest depreciation of the importance and excellency of female voices. The only question is as to which sex should lead in the singing.

“A choir of twenty or thirty singers concentrating their vocal energies mainly upon the melody, and singing with clear, distinct articulation, with bold, commanding tone, and with firm, steady, unvarying movement, may set before the congregation such a plain and inviting path of song, and may inspire with such confidence all who have the ability to sing, that the result will be a successful, and even admirable illustration of the people’s chorus. A hundred little rivulets, no one of which could find its way to the sea alone, may join the river that passes near them, and be wafted safely to the ocean; but the stream that conveys them owes much of its grandeur to these little tributaries. In the production of this great, melodic chorus, a strong lead of men’s voices upon the air is indispensable. Men’s voices are valuable for dignity and impressiveness; but in the chorus of which we speak, their chief value is their strength.” *

With the vocal power concentrated *mainly* upon the leading part, no untrained singer need be led astray by the sound of the other parts.

* Furber.

The variety of voice which obtains in all congregations is worthy of consideration. Many persons can sing easily upon a low key who find it almost impossible to raise their voices to a high pitch. These voices, when applied to the tenor or soprano, are harsh and unmanageable, but they are, in many cases, admirably adapted to the bass. Other voices which approach almost to a falsetto, and are utterly incapable of deep bass tones, may, nevertheless, do good service upon the melody. Hence, singing in parts, when it is properly done, so far from discouraging the masses from uniting in the service, gives a refreshing variety to the exercise, imparting force and vivacity to old as well as to new tunes, and gracefully accommodating itself to the peculiarities of all.

“To banish harmony from our congregational worship, would be to stifle a large and valuable portion of the human voice. Many a deep, rich, mellow voice, that rolls its majestic swell through our churches and chapels, on which the upper strains float, and with which they mingle like the ripples and spray of the ocean when its bosom is animated with a sunny breeze, must be coerced into silence and rest; or, if bass voices must sing the air in unison, it will be a laborious effort, like tearing up the organization; and, generally, when performed, will only add *noise* in the place of music. Surely our Creator, in making the human organs capable of such a variety and compass of intona-

tion, could not but intend them to be used for His praise and the delight of His creatures; but this can not be done, save on the principle of harmony.”*

The music of the spheres was a cherished idea with the ancients. Pythagoras, speaking of the heavenly bodies, says: “Their movements are in *harmony*, and highly melodious, but impossible to be heard by human ears.”

Dryden amplifies the idea, representing the atoms of which the world is made as marching, each particle to its place, to the music of the “morning stars.” He says:

“ From harmony, from heavenly harmony,

This universal frame began.

When nature underneath a heap of jarring atoms lay,

And could not heave her head,

The tuneful strain was heard from high,

Arise ye more than dead.

“ Then cold and hot, and moist and dry,

In order to their station leab,

And music’s power obey.”

In Addison’s well-known paraphrase of the nineteenth psalm, the sun, moon, and stars are represented as singing harmoniously their Creator’s praise as they pursue their ceaseless and sublime march through the heavens.

This is poetry, but it is the poetry of truth; it is based upon the great fact that God is the Creator and Upholder of all things. Why, then, should

* Hirst.

we reject harmony when we worship the God of harmony?

There is surely nothing on earth superior to it for grandeur and impressiveness. On the holy Sabbath, take your place in the house of God with the hundreds or thousands there assembled, most of whom sing correctly and spiritedly. Unite with them as they concentrate their voices upon one of those grand old Church tunes which have come down to us from a former age. Throughout the whole, the melody is made to predominate; but the rich, mellow bass, the smooth, pathetic alto, and the sublime tenor, all mingle their accordant notes with the air; and, upon the broad bosom of this deep, majestic, rolling river of song, the spirit is borne onward toward the anthems and raptures of eternity. There is here everything that can be thought of as constituting good music: there is sufficient strength or loudness; there is a charming variety; there is softness and sweetness of tone; and the harmonious blending of so many different voices, and the flowing together of the several parts, is a most beautiful type of that lovely union of spirit with spirit which characterizes the children of "our Father," whether on earth or in heaven.

We now gladly record the names of Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, as the advocates of harmonious congregational singing, or singing in parts; and to the list might be added

Lowell Mason, Thomas Hastings, and, as we verily believe, nine-tenths of the pious and judicious champions in the cause of sacred music now living. During our earthly sojourn, let us sing, not only melodiously, but also harmoniously, and at the close of our pilgrimage, may our ears be greeted with the

“Sound

Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tune *Angelic harmonies.*”

CHAPTER III.

FUGUE TUNES AND ANTHEMS.

Definition — **Origin** — Billings introduced Fugue Tunes into American Churches — **Objection** to this style of Music — John Wesley on Intricate and Undevout Singing — Description by Rector of St. Bardolph's — General Conference of 1792 — Plain Tunes — Dr. A. Clarke's **Objection** — What has been said in favor of Anthems — To what extent they should be used — **Vain Repetitions.**

A fugue tune is a composition in which the different parts follow each other, each repeating the subject at a certain interval above or below the preceding part.

It is supposed that this style of music was introduced into the Church, in Pagan lands, in the early ages of her history. The converted heathen would naturally transfer the music to which they had been accustomed from secular to sacred poetry, to be used in Divine worship. It is not unlikely that many of those compositions which had been used in the worship of idols in Greece and Rome were thus devoted to the praise of the living and true God. But this supposition is not conclusive against the use of fugue tunes in the Church. There is no sin in mere sound; and as for the association of these pieces with the worship of heathen deities, it certainly can have no effect upon us.

Fugue tunes were imported from England to this country, and were brought into use in the American Churches by William Billings. Fuguing music in Divine worship has been objected to on the ground that it is too complex and difficult for the masses. Besides, it necessarily excludes a portion of the congregation from the singing in certain parts of the tune. The former is surely a valid objection: everything that is intricate or very elaborate should be discarded, opposed as it is to the simplicity of the gospel. Even children and servants should be encouraged to participate in every part of the worship. Hence, the tunes used should be plain, strong, and easy to be sung. Light and flighty music should also be rejected, as it is calculated to repress rather than stimulate devotional feeling.

Much depends, however, upon the time, the place, and the occasion. Some, thinking, as it would seem, only of solemnity as befitting the Lord's house, would confine us to those slow, stately tunes which are hallowed by ancestral associations. Others, taking it for granted that the sole object of Church music is to please the ear, and that vivacity in singing is its chief excellence, are incessantly demanding those stirring modern pieces which were originally associated with worldly amusements, having but lately been elevated to their present position in the Church.

The proper course lies between these two ex-

tremes. A due admixture of the grave with the more lively pieces is certainly desirable. As it regards the use of the latter style of music, we think considerable latitude should be allowed. While tunes of a frivolous, or extremely volatile character should be promptly rejected as utterly unfit for devotional purposes; yet at camp-meetings, experience meetings, prayer meetings, and during revivals, tunes of a soul-stirring character are especially needed.

Fugue tunes are generally too fanciful for either public or social worship. They have also been objected to on the ground that they often occasion "vain repetitions," frequently destroying the sense of the words to which they are sung. Unimportant words are frequently made prominent, reminding us of a beggar invested with the honors of royalty.

Speaking of intricate and undevout singing, John Wesley said to his brethren many years ago: "Is not this formality creeping in already by those complex tunes which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion? . . . such as the long, quavering hallelujah annexed to the morning song tune, which I defy any man living to sing devoutly.

"The repeating of the same words so often (but especially while another repeats different words, the horrid abuse which runs through the modern Church music), as it shocks all common sense, so it necessarily brings in dead formality, and has

no more of religion in it than a Lancashire horn-pipe. Besides, it is a flat contradiction of our Lord's command—'Use not vain repetitions.' For what is vain repetition if this is not? What end of devotion does it serve?"

How would he have relished the singing of the following stanza as described by the Rector of St. Bardolph's? How could any Christian tolerate it?

" ' True love is like that precious oil,
Which, pour'd on Aaron's head,
Ran down his beard, and o'er his robes
Its costly moisture shed.'

"In the prodigious effort of this performance, the ear-splitting combination of the several voices hardly bore a resemblance to that oily current poured on Aaron's head, and which

" ' Ran down his beard, and o'er his head—
Ran down his beard—
—————his robes
And o'er his robes————
Ran down his beard——ran down his
—————o'er his robes.——
His robes, his robes, ran down his beard—
Ran down his————
—————o'er his robes,
Ran down his beard——
—————h-i-s b-e-a-r-d——
Its costly moist——
Ran down his beard——
—ure—beard—his—beard—his—shed
Ran down his beard—his—down
His robes—its costly moist—his beard
—ure shed—his cost—his robes—ure shed
Its c-o-s-t-l-y mois-ture——shed!'

“The late Bishop Seabury, being asked his opinion of this performance, replied that he had paid no attention to the music, but that his sympathies were so much excited for poor Aaron that he was afraid he would not have a hair left on his head.”

In the year 1792, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church inserted in the Discipline the following recommendation and explanatory note: “The preachers are desired not to encourage the singing of fugue tunes in our congregations.

“We do not think that fugue tunes are sinful, or improper to be used in private companies; but we do not approve of their being used in our public congregations, because public singing is a part of Divine worship in which the whole congregation ought to join.”

Although these words have since disappeared from the Discipline, the view which they express still prevails in most places.

In the Notes appended to the Discipline in the year 1796, by Bishops Coke and Asbury, the importance of congregational singing is forcibly urged, and in the same connection it is added: “From these remarks we surely must be sensible of the necessity of confining ourselves to *simple* tunes, as the fugue tunes have an unavoidable tendency to confine to a few this part of Divine worship, which belongs to the whole. And those,

we think, have made few remarks on public worship, who have not observed, on the one hand, how naturally the fugue tunes puff up with vanity those who excel in them; and, on the other hand, how it deadens devotion, and only at the best raises an admiration of the singers, and not of Christ."

The rule laid down for Church music in England, nearly a thousand years ago, was *Simplicem sanctamque melodiam, secundum morem ecclesiæ, sectentur*. That is—"Let them observe a simple and sacred melody, after the manner of the Church."

Queen Elizabeth, in her injunctions respecting public worship, says that she "willeth that there be a modest and distinct song used in all parts of the Common Prayer in the Church, that the same may be *understanded* as if it were read, without singing."

The judicious Hooker says: "In Church music, curiosity and ostentation of art, wanton or light and unsuitable harmony, such as only pleaseth the ear, should be rejected. On the other hand, when it fitly suiteth well, the matter altogether sounding the praise of God, it is in truth most admirable, and doth much edify. . . . They must have hearts very dry and tough, from whom the melody of the psalms doth not sometime draw that wherein a mind religiously affected delighteth."

"Church music," says Archbishop Parker, who

lived in the sixteenth century, "was designed to be congregational, and so plain, simple and grave in its melody, that all the people might sing, as well with the understanding as the spirit. It has been reserved for modern days to substitute the changing variety of airs and measures for the plain, yet rich and majestic psalmody of the Apostolic age; and by the translation of the lighter airs of the parlor to public worship, to carry one, by the irresistible laws of association, to secular scenes and thoughts."

"Music for the worship of Jehovah," says Mr. Freeman, "should be simple, easy and solemn. Repetitions should be sparingly used in public worship, and never without evident propriety."

Dr. Adam Clarke objected to "the gingling, and often foolish sounds which we use when a single monosyllable is shivered into thirty-six demi-semi-quavers."

The right of Anthems to a place in the Church service has been seriously questioned by some, and by others their use has been strenuously opposed, mainly on the ground that they are so utterly unsuited to devotional exercises, that the congregation does not even profess to unite with the choir in singing them.

The anthem is a tune set to words taken from the Psalms, or other parts of the Scriptures, and

was first introduced into the English Church service in Elizabeth's reign.

It is contended in favor of anthems that they give expression to the words more fully and forcibly than plain tunes. In anthem music, the tune is especially adapted and permanently wedded to the words, it being the object of the composer to secure, not only a general correspondence between the character of the tune and that of the poetry, but also to bring out those nicer shades of meaning and emphasis which are too apt to be overlooked, or to be imperfectly appreciated. It is thought that this can not be done on the system of accommodation—that is, singing a dozen or a hundred tunes to the same words.

Again, it is urged that music of an ornate or elaborate style should be admitted for the encouragement of the choir. Those who lead the singing, having been musically educated, and being accustomed to devote an evening every week to the practice of such tunes as are used in the Church service, ought to be allowed to gratify their taste for the more admired and more difficult pieces.

But we are persuaded that an answer to all such arguments is furnished in what has already been said in regard to plain tunes. The time may come when the people will be prepared to unite in the singing of Anthems and fugue tunes, but that period is evidently distant.

We do not intend in these remarks to exclude those few favorite fugue pieces, such as Coronation, which time and use have made venerable: we do not intend to say that anthems should never enter the portals of the Church. To say so might be to reflect upon the singing of David, Asaph, and their compeers. It would be difficult to show that they eschewed anthems. Hear the "sweet singer" as he raises his heart and voice to the words: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!" An anthem, properly sung as a prelude to the morning service, is certainly admissible. By this means, the thoughts are called away from worldly pursuits and pleasures, and a soothing, elevating influence is exerted upon the assembly.

As it regards "vain repetitions" in fugue tunes, the objection can not be admitted in full force, inasmuch as it has been the custom of pious people in all ages to repeat, frequently and earnestly, the words used in Divine worship. It is only a trivial and unmeaning repetition that merits our unqualified disapproval. But no palliating considerations are sufficient to countervail the well grounded objections to the introduction of difficult music into the Church.

In ordinary tunes, the singing of the different parts together encourages the congregation to unite in the worship; but, as a general rule, the use of fugue tunes and anthems is inexpedient.

CHAPTER IV.

ADAPTATION—ARTICULATION—ACCENT—ATTITUDE.

Tune must be Adapted to the Words — The Song must be Adapted to the Time, Place and Occasion — Bishop Pierce — Remarks by N. D. Gould — Another Illustrative Instance — Spirit which Pervades the Singing — Want of Feeling in Singers — Importance of a Good Articulation — Management of the Voice — No Music without Accent — Management of the Breath — A Standing Position Preferable — Dr. Guthrie's Remarks.

Incongruity of arrangement often sadly mars the effect of that which would otherwise be pleasing and impressive. A painting may be faultless in design, but the various colors may be so unskillfully disposed as to produce a caricature rather than a tasteful and life-like picture. Plain apparel neatly adjusted is attractive; but he who wears black on his head, russet on his feet, and buttons around him a coat of crimson or scarlet, is but little better than a scare-crow. Divine worship, properly conducted, is the most imposing and impressive exercise that can be witnessed or participated in by mortals; and yet, the hymn and the tune, the prayer and the discourse, may be so at war with each other as to remind us of a world in chaos. Eschewing fastidious niceness, we are in duty bound to make

the services, as far as possible, homogeneous. The Apostolic injunction is: "Let all things be done decently and in order." There must be Adaptation.

The tune must be adapted to the words. The great design of singing is to stimulate religious feeling. This is done by suggesting to the mind appropriate words, the import of which is impressed upon the heart by suitable sounds; therefore, the tune and the words must harmonize; they must be a unit—two things congenial in their nature, blended into one. Any contrariety in their spirit or tendency must of necessity create confusion and unpleasantness, thus defeating the object sought to be accomplished.

Singing is a refined species of elocution. The sounds are intended to give expression to the words, just as in oratory the gesticulation of the speaker and the glance of his eye are designed to give life and efficiency to his utterances. The singing of words expressive of sadness or solemnity to a lively tune; or words of a jubilant or rapturous character to a grave, dull, monotonous air, would be as antagonistic, inelegant and intolerable as would be the portrayal of the terrors of the law by the minister in soft and soothing tones, or the exhibition of the "precious promises" in a violent and vociferous manner.

The fiery syllables which were uttered by Jehovah on the summit of Mount Sinai were

invested with terrific power and grandeur, by the quaking of the mountain, the thunderings and the lightnings, and the clangor of the trumpet which waxed louder and louder. But when "the Friend of sinners" opened His mouth on Mount Olivet to pronounce blessings upon His followers, all was peaceful and serene, thus most happily illustrating, and most successfully energizing the words of the Redeemer, which, although not without penal sanctions, were, nevertheless,

* "Like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bed of violets,
Stealing and giving odors."

So, there will be found in the Scriptures, from beginning to end, a beautiful and philosophical correspondence between the means used and the end to be accomplished.

For the want of this, how often have we failed to derive profit and pleasure from the service of song? When everything promised well, we have been painfully disappointed. The hymn was, perhaps, a master-piece from the pen of Wesley or Watts. The tune was known to be a general favorite. The people sang correctly and with a due degree of energy. The different parts were pitched upon the right key, and the music itself was good. Still there was something wrong; the performance utterly failed to produce the anticipated effect. All was cold, barren, dead, and the sense of dissatisfaction experienced by all present

continued until the close of the hymn brought relief. What was the matter? This is a problem of easy solution. There was a glaring want of adaptation—an attempt was made to unite vivacity with stateliness, and the want of congeniality was as great as it is when a hoary-headed grand-sire of three score and ten is joined in wedlock to a blooming maiden of sixteen.

The words, on the occasion, may have been the following:

“ Salvation, O the joyful sound!
’Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sovereign balm for ev’ry wound,
A cordial for our fears.”

These gladsome lines, sung to the grief-burdened notes of a funeral tune, resulted in such a complete contradiction—such a ludicrous jumble—such an outrageous attack upon common sense and good taste, as to cool the ardor of devotion and expose the service to ridicule. It was the bearer of glad tidings coming to us in tears, and delivering his message in slow and mournful accents. Precisely similar is the effect when words that bend, and almost break with sorrow, are sung to a brisk and exhilarating tune. It is like snow in harvest, or vinegar upon nitre.

On the contrary, when there is a becoming similitude between the words and the tune, they both move along together gracefully and lovingly, like twin sisters, smiling, and, to each other, giving

countenance and support at every step. It is *concord*, doubtless, that gives sweetness and sublimity to the songs of angels.

This subject is especially commended to the careful consideration of those who lead in the singing. It is an easy matter to raise a common metre tune to a common metre hymn; but to apply to the words a tune which will, in the most effectual manner possible, carry them to the heart, melting it, humbling it, and uplifting it in adoring love to the God of all grace, is a work that requires knowledge and prayerful consideration. There must be a knowledge of the import and spirit of the hymns in common use; there must be constantly on hand a fair supply of tunes of the several metres; and, from these tunes, there must be a judicious selection.

To do this with faultless discrimination, requires skill in hymnology and music beyond what would be ordinarily expected; but to make two classes of hymns and two classes of tunes, thus securing a general distinction between the grave and the sprightly, is, comparatively, an easy achievement. Let the buoyant, animating tunes and words constitute one department; let the hymns and words of the opposite character constitute the other: when the time for service comes, let this classification be borne in mind, and the poetry and air will be properly consorted without difficulty. Let no chorister, whether learned or other-

wise, shrink from the effort to do his work well. A great responsibility is upon him. The benefit to be derived from the singing by the congregation depends, in a great degree, upon the manner in which it is conducted.

The tune and the words must be adapted to the time, the place, and the occasion.

There are two classes of emotions which it is the office of music to excite—the mournful and the joyful; and those who select the hymns and the tunes should mentally inquire—“what is the leading characteristic of this occasion?—what particular class of feelings should be especially appealed to?” The adaptation of the tune to the poetry might be perfect, and yet the selection might be so wide of the mark as to render the music an abrupt intrusion upon the meditations of the assembly. To this point let careful attention be given by ministers and choristers.

Bishop Pierce, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, gives us an incident which will help to illustrate. A minister (of what denomination we are not informed) conducting Divine service at night, was giving out that excellent *morning* hymn which commences :

“ We lift our hearts to Thee,
O Day-star from on high!
The sun itself is but Thy shade,
Yet cheers both earth and sky.”

During the singing, nearly all the lights went out,

and darkness prevailed ; but the preacher, nothing daunted, continued the reading, and announced the third stanza, which is as follows :

“ How beauteous nature now !
How dark and sad before !
With joy we view the pleasing change,
And nature's God adore.”

This reminds us of a venerable and useful minister who, on a bright and beautiful morning, arose in the pulpit to commence the service, and gave out the hymn—

“ The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear.”

Some in the congregation sung. Was this right ?

Speaking of the want of adaptation as it existed in former days, Mr. N. D. Gould says : “ We have known many strange and egregious improprieties of this kind. When there was any public occasion which required singing, such as an ordination or installation of a minister, dedication of a church, installation of a Masonic lodge, Fast, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc., it seemed that, instead of selecting words appropriate for the occasion, the inquiry was, rather, what tunes were the most popular, or would most please. We will mention one or two examples : When Judgment Hymn, the air said to have been written by Martin Luther, was first introduced to the public in this country, and performed by the Handel and Haydn Society, with the words, ‘ Great God,

what do I see and hear,' with instrumental accompaniment, the effect was powerful; the fame of it soon spread through the country, and, it being understood that it was not difficult to perform, copies were procured by a choir for the purpose of singing it at an *ordination*! Billings' 'Anthem for Easter,' words, 'The Lord is risen indeed,' was used, and considered proper on all the foregoing occasions."

A Judgment tune, sung to Resurrection words, at an ordination, dedication, or thanksgiving service!

In the same connection, we have the following narrative by a gentleman who was leisurely traveling on horseback from a city into the adjoining country. He says: "Seeing a gathering at a school-house near the road, remote from any other building, I dismounted, tied my horse, approached the house, inquired the occasion of the collection; was told that their singing-master had made an anthem for an ordination that was to take place in a few days, and that the singers had met to learn it. Being a stranger, the crowd that had gathered about the house to hear the performance politely made a passage for me, even into the interior. The singers, I found, all held a manuscript copy of what they were singing; the leader, with his coat off, beating time with his head, both hands, and one foot. Knowing the impropriety

of entering a room where singers are in the midst of rehearsing a tune, I held back at first ; but no, as though they feared I should lose some important strain by delay, the spectators hurried me on to the sight and hearing of the performers. When they had gotten through, and sounded out the Amen, long and loud, the leader and author politely handed me a copy of the anthem ; and as their articulation was such that I had not been able to distinguish a single word of what I had heard sung, I, therefore, set about reading the lines, and found, to my astonishment, that they were the familiar words of boyhood, being a fable taken from an old spelling-book, commencing as follows : ‘ An old man found a rude boy up one of his trees, stealing apples, and desired him to come down,’ ” etc.

We have another illustrative instance to give, which was received from a minister who was present on the occasion. The officiating preacher was a stranger to the people, and the people were strangers to him. At the appointed hour, he arose in the pulpit and read, you will suppose,

“ Before Jehovah’s awful throne,”

“ Come, let us join our cheerful songs,”

or some other hymn of undoubted merit and appropriateness. But you must understand that the preacher, being about to introduce himself to the people, desired something of a more personal

character. Then, you will conjecture that the words were the following :

“ We bid thee welcome in the name
Of Jesus, our exalted Head.”

But these surmises are all widely different from the reality. Our newly inaugurated pastor surprised his flock by reading out for his first hymn these words :

“ Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb;
Take this new treasure to thy trust,
And give these sacred relics room
To slumber in the silent dust.”

The second hymn selected and sung was like unto the first. It commences with the familiar words :

“ Why do we mourn departing friends?”

These are, of course, extreme cases, but they are also representative of a class of improprieties which are by no means of rare occurrence. In everything pertaining to the sanctuary, how exceedingly desirable is the exercise of sound judgment and good taste.

Again, the spirit which pervades the singing should be adapted to the tune and the words, also to the time, place and occasion. All the selections and arrangements may be appropriate, but song must have a soul as well as a body. Feeling must always be the great characteristic of good singing. The bare reading of the words

would be more effectual than a thoughtless, soulless attempt to sing them. There must be spirit in Church singing; not simply a musical spirit, such as that which predominates at the theatre or the opera; but a Sabbath spirit—a devotional spirit—a spirit in unison with the sentiments which we utter. Without this, the music can not possibly give *expression* to the poetry.

Feeling is the soul of eloquent speaking. The orator must have a vivid conception of the meaning and force of the language which clothes his ideas—his winged and glowing thoughts must go out upon the assembly warm from the heart; and so it must be in singing whenever its legitimate effect is produced. The mind, having been withdrawn from sublunary scenes, must be intently fixed upon the words used; and these, being clearly apprehended, and appreciated, will naturally and spontaneously give tone and significance to the strains in which they are sounded forth.

The writer's mind recurs, at this moment, to a precentor, chorister, or tune-raiser, whichever appellation may be preferred, who seemed to have no lack of confidence in his musical capabilities, and who evidently took great pleasure in filling the office which he had voluntarily assumed. While the minister was in the act of reading the first two lines of the stanza, our leader, with an air of self-importance, surveyed the congregation, as if greatly delighted with the idea of conferring hap-

piness upon so many people. The last syllable of the couplet had scarcely escaped the preacher's lips, when our accommodating friend pitched the tune on rather a high key, and proceeded so rapidly as almost to defy competition. Nor did he cease to gaze upon the audience with an air of idle indifference and self-complacency. His whole demeanor seemed to say—"This is easy work for me—I am doing it to perfection—it is as natural for me to sing as it is for the brook to ripple along over its pebbly bed—it is not even necessary for me to *think* of the words, or of *worship*, or of anything else in particular." Thus our wandering-minded, icy-hearted, high-strung, galloping cantillator continued to the close of the hymn; and that delectable exercise, instead of satiating, only whetted his appetite for the next one. Sometimes, before or after the service, he would sing *solo*—he never got tired of singing—and then, having it all to himself, he seemed to enjoy his freedom *hugely*; he scampered along in double-quick time, and his accelerated and unfeeling clatter reminded those who had the misfortune to be near him of the sound of the blacksmith's hammer when he makes haste to strike while the iron is hot; or, of a child beating drum on a broken kettle. The utter thoughtlessness which marked all the performances of this well-meaning man amounted to an *affliction* in the case of those who tried to be devotional.

“As general rules, accordant with common sense and the dictates of nature, all who appreciate the sentiment sung, will observe, for instance, in the *pathetic*, the slow and soft; in the *beautiful*, the quick and soft; in the *spirited*, the quick and loud; in the *grand*, the slow and loud—whilst other passages will be considered as requiring no considerable change from the common movement or quantity; but a peculiar distinctness of utterance, or some distinction in the tone or modulation of the voice, expressive of the sentiment. A good judgment and due attention to sentiment will generally dictate the proper expression, especially when the heart is truly pious.”

“The psalm may be sung,” says Mr. Freeman, “with precision, every note in the tune being correctly sounded, and yet there may be a want of expression, and the music may, therefore, be without effect. The expression of the voice should be accommodated to the nature of the sentiment expressed, and for this purpose the sentiment must be *understood*.”

Mr. Gould says: “The words we sing must be so clearly apprehended and felt as to make them our own. We must speak them out; for the words will not, without our aid, make any impression on our own feelings, or the hearts of others. Reason teaches us that, if words are sacred, the mind should be directed toward the Being we address, and carried away from man and earth, and from

all thought of making a display of musical talent. If the words are solemn and sublime, the mind should be fixed on the grand and awful scenes which time and eternity present. If plaintive or pathetic, we should bring the scenes they are intended to represent home to our own hearts. If supplicatory, our minds should be impressed with the fact that it is as solemn to address the throne of grace in sacred song, as to use the same language in the voice of prayer. With these feelings and views, individuals and choirs can scarcely fail of giving that kind of expression which will do good; and without them all is solemn mockery."

"The voice of the Church," says Mr. Willis, "as heard in her solemn music, should be full of joy—but full of dignity. Full of tenderness—but full of manly depth. Full of sorrow and hearty contrition—but full of earnest strength. Full of love—but full of awe: and, therefore, utterly free from sentimentality and languishment."

"Let a congregation," says Mr. Furber, "be required to sing, now soft, now loud, now fast, now slowly, now crescendo, now diminuendo, and now with prolonged and gliding notes, and always with such deference for punctuation that a comma would bring an entire assembly to a sudden, startling pause, and the attempt to do this, besides being in itself a pretentious failure, would defeat every religious end which psalmody contemplates."

In singing, our observance of rules must become

a habit—a sort of second nature, our music being a genuine emanation from the heart—the blazing out of the fire which burns within.

Finally, it has been contended that the style of music should be adapted to the peculiarities of the race by which it is used. A writer in one of our quarterlies has advanced some interesting views on the subject. He traces the difference between the Teutonic *major* mood and the Celtic *minor*. The fourth and seventh degrees of the Teutonic scale are omitted in the Celtic. The peculiar wildness which characterizes Scotch melodies is wholly due to this fact. In Celtic music, the minor mood predominates; in Teutonic, the major mood. The Teuton can not appreciate and enjoy the Celtic music; nor can the Teutonic style charm the Celt, a fact not easily accounted for.

Attention is also called by this writer to the fact that the middle and western parts of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia were settled chiefly with a people of Celtic blood; therefore, it is believed that Celtic provincialisms, social habits, and religious sentiments, are the prevailing characteristics of the inhabitants of the Southern States.

This being the case, the general use of German music by the Southern people is unwise in the extreme. German music teachers never can successfully instruct those who are of Celtic descent, and

we ought, therefore, to employ properly qualified Celto-American, or Anglo-American teachers.

We receive, with some abatement, the general principle which underlies our author's reasoning: nations have their peculiar style of music, as well as their peculiar laws and customs; and men are apt to place a high estimate upon that which has come down to them from a former age, and with which they have been familiar from childhood. But we may err in the application of this principle. It is a fact, that throughout our whole country, those very tunes which the writer in the Review gives as specimens of "the German choral," such as *Old Hundreth*, *Medway*, and *Nottingham*, have well subserved the purposes of worship. Congregations composed of persons of both German and Scottish extraction, have sung them, enjoyed them, been benefited by them, and, for aught that has appeared to the contrary, the representatives of each country in an equal degree.

The principle of adaptation would seem to require a selection of tunes comprising favorite pieces of both styles of music. In entirely discarding the Teutonic element, we should lose much; and to ignore the good, old, revival, Celtic minors, sung with such happy effect by our pioneer ancestors and their children, would be to make a void in our Church music which the finest modern compositions never could fill.

The wants of a mixed population may be most ef-

fectually met by a collection of pieces correspondingly miscellaneous. We can hardly suppose that our friend would object to a work comprising a judicious selection of German pieces, together with a liberal supply of such old minors as *Supplication*, *Solemnity* and *Liberty Hall*.

With him, we prefer that which is American to that which is imported, whenever it can be made available.

We can scarcely overstate the importance of a clear and distinct Articulation in devotional singing. We can not confess our sins in music; we can not ask forgiveness in music; we can not thank and adore the Giver of all our blessings in music. There must be an exercise of mind as well as the pleasurable sensations produced by sweet sounds. Mere music is too indefinite and intangible a thing to be the vehicle of worship; it must be combined with suitable words. From sacred history, we learn that this alliance has existed from time immemorial.

If, then, we pretend to utter words when we sing, the utterance should, of course, be as correct and intelligible as possible: an indolent, artificial or slovenly enunciation can only be excused on the ground of ignorance, or of radical defectiveness in the vocal organs.

A good articulation is as important to the singer as it is to the speaker. Even if the matter which

the orator intends to discuss could by some means be known to the audience without the use of language, yet if he essay to employ words, a decent respect for the persons addressed requires that these words be spoken, not as in ridicule or mockery, but with propriety.

Those who sing are expected also to listen, and in every congregation there are silent auditors. Now, if the words which are sung be so drawled, tortured, and jumbled together as to produce an unmeaning and ridiculous jargon, what better is that than speaking in the church in an unknown tongue? Is it not even more intolerable? St. Paul reproves the Corinthians for singing and praying in a language that the people did not understand, and he declares that he had rather speak five words intelligibly than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. "Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?"

The editor of the *Home Circle* gives an account of an old man who, from sheer laziness, as it seemed, had acquired a trick of lapping his tongue under nearly every word he uttered in singing—as "*Culm thoul Fount.*" Some take unwarranted liberties with the letter d, by separating it from the word to which it belongs, and carrying it over to the succeeding word, thus causing

deficiency in the former and redundancy in the latter, as

“An dare we yet alive?”

“An dif our fellowship below”—

Others have an indescribable method of twirling certain letters, particularly the letter *v*. A distinguished author informs us that this habit prevailed extensively in this country some years ago. He says that, in some places, there seemed to be an effort made by the sexes to outvie each other in this whirling, whizzing operation, and that the feminine contestants invariably took the palm.

Bass singers not unfrequently ignore articulation almost entirely. Having apparently but little use for the tongue, they keep up a sort of unearthly drone or groan, from the beginning to the end of the tune.

Others attempt to edify us by a constant nasal twanging, taking care to begin the stanza a little in advance of the rest of the singers, and to sigh out the last syllable *solo*, that we may be enabled to appreciate the excellence of the performance!

The omission of letters, syllables, and even words, is a common occurrence. But time would fail us to point out all the different phases of a vicious articulation.

These inaccuracies may, we think, be corrected with ease. The Italians have a proverb—“Read well—sing well.” All who read well

do not sing well; yet good reading is evidently the basis of good singing. Let a half hour each day be spent in reading aloud, with the express design of acquiring a perfect articulation; then let the learner exercise himself in singing occasionally with direct reference to this object, and the difficulty will soon vanish. The habit will be formed of expressing every vowel, syllable, and word clearly.

“In the management of the voice, the first object,” says Mr. Turner, “will be to obtain a natural tone in its *purest* state. A *pure* voice is that which comes forth neat and clean from the *chest*, passing freely through the mouth. To produce this, great care must be taken that the mouth be kept moderately open. If it be too much closed, the voice will strike against the teeth and lips, and be thereby vitiated and enfeebled; or it will cause that peculiar action of the nose, which renders the tone nasal.”

Mr. Hirst says: “The precise articulation of the words is an excellence that can not be neglected without injury to good music. Some singers are in the habit of giving a strange and fanciful, yet, to all persons who have any skill in language, disgusting pronunciation to many words; so much so, that at times it would be difficult to ascertain what language they use.”

Mr. Nathan observes: “The formation of the mouth should not be altered while singing a vowel,

otherwise the correct pronunciation of such words as yes, no, smile, me, she, sigh, and many others, is destroyed, or changed into unmeaning expressions, as *yeas*, *noa*, *smoil*, *moy*, *mea*, *shea floy*, *sigha*, and so on. Is it natural to hear such a perversion of orthography from the lips of well educated persons, who would, no doubt, be very tenacious in speaking, but yet will make no scruple in thus departing from propriety in singing, when, in fact, one of the chief beauties in the science is elegant pronunciation?"

To secure this, let it always be borne in mind that the consonants must be *spoken*, and the vowels *sounded*, that freedom being accorded to the voice which is claimed by the spirit of song. The sound must not be stifled in the throat of the singer, nor mutilated between the teeth.

Attention should also be given to Accent, in music. In reading, every word of more than one syllable has its accented letters, and every sentence has its emphatic words; so in singing, the tune is divided into measures, and each measure has its accented, and its unaccented parts. It has been forcibly said that there is no more music in singing without accent than there is in the humming of a bee. Such singing would be fitly represented by reading when every syllable and every word received precisely the same stress of voice. A graceful and impressive accentuation does not

require us to sing the unaccented parts of the measure in an ordinary tone, and then to pour out a full volume of voice on the accented notes. On the contrary, we should sing the accented syllables with customary ease and force, restraining the voice on the unaccented parts. The degree of softness must, of course, depend upon the style of the music and the meaning of the words. Habit and a due appreciation of the spirit of the song, will enable us to place the accent correctly, almost without effort. An author who wrote twenty-five years ago gives us the following directions :

“ In common time remember well, by art,
The first and third is the accented part ;
And if your music triple time should be,
Your accent is the first of every three.”

Much depends also upon the proper *management of the breath*.

“Power or softness, volubility or sweetness, depend greatly on the prudent management of the breath. By a proper inflation of the lungs at the beginning of a note, the singer is enabled to give that gradual swell and diminution of voice which forms one of the most exquisite beauties of the science.”

Breath should be taken at every pause in the music, but never in the middle of a word. It should not be lavished too freely upon the first note or two, lest the supply be exhausted before an opportunity occurs to replenish. In that case

the voice loses its firmness and smoothness, and sinks into the tremulousness of extreme old age.

“Tonal utterance requires prolongation of sound. When this necessary condition of song is wanting, as it must be, if every pause which the sense of the hymn admits is allowed to suspend the voice, melody is destroyed, and singing becomes declamation. Even that momentary cessation of tone which is necessary in taking breath, constitutes an imperfection in singing, and the art of concealing the act of breathing, so as to break as little as possible the flow of a melody, is always cultivated by the best vocalists.”

Care should be taken in singing to avoid all unauthorized *embellishments*. In reading, we should grossly misrepresent the author if we were to interpolate a half dozen words in every sentence; but many persons, in singing, do a like injustice to the composer of the tune, without compunction. What are intended to be *grace notes* and slurs are introduced into every measure with the view of giving to the tune that vivacity and elegance which the author failed to impart to it. This mending operation is bad enough in an amateur performance, but in public worship, it is incomparably worse. Of course no one can follow the innovator in all his windings and warblings: he must run around, above, and beneath, by himself; and the effect is to offend the ears and distract the minds of the worshipers, thus seriously marring the beauty and

effect of the service. There are, doubtless, many singers, both male and female, who have unconsciously contracted this habit of *ornamentation*, and who would do well to correct it as speedily as possible.

Attitude in singing is a subject which deserves consideration. Standing was unquestionably the posture observed by the singers in the olden time. They were directed "to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even." The Psalmist says: "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord: praise Him all ye servants of the Lord. Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God." From the fact that the standing posture for singers is frequently alluded to in the Scriptures, and sitting never, we may certainly conclude that the former is preferable. Superiors may be expected to *sit* in the presence of inferiors; but standing is a reverential attitude such as becometh those who would worship the Most High in song.

A standing position is also much to be preferred because it gives such freedom to the chest, and such power to the vocal organs generally, as can not be commanded by those who remain seated.

It is frequently very difficult to overcome that feeling of languor and drowsiness which is apt to steal upon those who, being accustomed to physical activity, sit down quietly in the church, wear-

ing more than their usual quantity of clothing. This sleepy influence must be overcome, or it will assuredly assert its dominion over its subjects. To sit during the entire service, is most favorable to *Morpheus*; but to stand up frequently, and exercise the voice and the heart in singing, is well calculated to arouse the energies of both body and mind, and to promote that spiritual fervor which should ever characterize our worship.

“The restoration of the old, chaste music, about the year 1808, awakened an interest in singers of preceding generations. Ministers and Churches were satisfied that poor singing made a miserable congregation; and, as one writer says, made an open window for the preacher’s instructions to escape. It was now fondly anticipated that a generation of singers would rise up and sing. *Rise up and sing*, did we say? This might be said of some congregations now, as it was of those who sang praises to God in the days of the patriarchs and prophets; but it is entirely inapplicable to religious meetings in these days, when worshipers take their seats when they enter the vestry or place of worship, and many of them never rise till the closing benediction or doxology. This custom has not been of long continuance; and we believe, if Christians were awake to the best interests of their own souls, and the souls of sinners, they would not sluggishly sit and sing, when

neither the voice nor the spirit of the song seems to rise above the seats which they occupy."

Let no one but an invalid claim to have sufficient reason for sitting during the singing. We are informed that the Pilgrim fathers sometimes sang thirty stanzas at one time, standing all the while, after standing through a long prayer! The singing of one psalm sometimes occupied a full half hour, and the prayer frequently a longer time!

Not long since, Dr. Guthrie, a distinguished divine of Edinburg, expressed from the pulpit "a wish to disburden his conscience" on a matter which had long pressed upon it. He said that the proper attitude for singing was standing—proper, because it was an act of worship; and proper, because it was the better fitted for an act of singing. He said he believed that there was a prejudice in favor of sitting during the singing of the Psalms, on the ground that it was a good old Scotch custom. This was an entire mistake. The good old Scotch custom was to stand; and sitting was first introduced into Scotland by the recommendation of the Westminster Commissioners, who desired uniformity in worship in both parts of the island. It was introduced into Scotland in compliance with English prejudices.

This subject is eminently worthy of regard. Doubtless there might be an improvement, even in Churches where it is customary to stand at the

beginning and close of the service, and to sit during the singing of the second hymn. Why not always stand when we engage in the service of praise? Where it is the custom to kneel in prayer, it seems to be especially appropriate to stand in singing.

CHAPTER V.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

Invention of Musical Instruments — Egypt Claims Precedence — Also the Chinese — Devotion of the Grecians to Music — Romans — Music in Great Britain — The Organ — Dr. A. Clarke on Instrumental Music — Richard Baxter's View — Horne and Richmond — What Richard Watson says — David — Silence of Christ and the Apostles on the subject — J. Wesley's advice as to Organs — Portrait of a Good Organist — Various kinds of Instruments — We should always Sing Spiritually — Church Service should be Attractive — Objections Neutralized — The best Arrangement.

We have already seen that musical instruments were invented by Jubal, about five hundred years after the Creation.

Instrumental, as well as vocal music, was common among the Jews, from the days of Moses until their national existence ended under the crushing sway of Imperial Rome. It was used, as we have seen, in their public worship, in their wars, and at their social gatherings, whether for mourning or rejoicing.

Egypt puts in her claim as the inventor of instruments of music. Tradition states that, "the Nile having overflowed its banks at the periodical time for the rise of that wonderful river; on its subsidence to its usual level, several dead animals

were left on the shore ; and, among the rest, a tortoise, the flesh of which being dried and wasted in the sun, nothing remained within the shell but nerves and cartilages, which, being lightened and contracted by the heat, became sonorous. Mercury, walking along the banks of the river, happened to strike against this shell, and was so pleased with the sound produced that the idea of the *lyre* suggested itself to his imagination. The first instrument he constructed was in the form of a tortoise, and was strung with the sinews of dried animals."

The Mercury here mentioned was so called by the Latins, but was named Hermes by the Greeks, and Thent or Thoth by the Egyptians. He was secretary to Osiris, one of the kings of Egypt.

The Chinese also claim to be the inventors of musical instruments. Their first prince, Fo Hi, it is said, "made a most beautiful lyre and guitar, adorned with precious stones, which produced a most noble harmony, curbed the passions, and elevated man to virtue and heavenly truth."

Great attention was given to music in Babylon during the captivity of the Jews, about five hundred and sixty years before Christ. At the sound of the "cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music," the people were required to fall down and worship the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

The Grecians were renowned for their knowl-

edge of astronomy, philosophy, poetry, music, and the other branches of science. But, as Fermely says, "in the period of their greatest barbarism, this art (music) outweighed every other merit."

Music is mentioned in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* upward of fifty times, and always with rapture. Vocal music seems to have been most general. Homer speaks of singing without instruments; but never of instrumental music apart from vocal.

The Romans cultivated music with some success, having received much aid in that, as in the other sciences, from the Grecians.

Music, both with and without instruments, has been assiduously cultivated in Great Britain from an early period of her history to the present time.

When the Puritans left their native shores and took up their abode in the New World, they eschewed all display in Divine worship; and, of course, rejected instrumental music with Cromwellian determination. This proscription continued for a century. Eventually, the pitch-pipe was allowed in the Church; then the tuning-fork, the flute, the hautboy, the clarionet, the bassoon, etc., and, chief among the rest, the organ.

There is a difference of opinion as to the time when this noble instrument was initiated into the service of the Church. Some fix the date in the fourth century; some in the eighth, and others contend for a still later period. The following description, it is said, was written one thousand

three hundred years ago: "The organ is an instrument of divers pipes, formed with a kind of tower, which by means of bellows is made to produce a low sound; and, in order to express agreeable melodies, there are in the inside, movements made of wood, that are pressed down with the finger of the player, and produce the most pleasing and brilliant tones."

Hirst quotes St. Jerome's assertion, of doubtful authority, of an organ with twelve pairs of bellows, which might be heard at the distance of nearly a mile; and another at Jerusalem that might be heard at the Mount of Olives. It is said that, in A. D. 757, an organ was presented to Pepin, King of France. During the tenth century, the use of the organ became general in Germany, Italy, and England, but differed materially from the organ of our day.

A few centuries ago, the rage for rigid simplicity banished the organ from Scotland, designating it "*The devil's box o' whistle pipes.*"

The first organ used in America, if we are correctly informed, was imported in August, 1713, by Thomas Brattle, Esq., for Queen's Chapel, Boston. The first organ of American manufacture was built by Edward Bromfield, of Boston, in the year 1745.

Much has been said, *pro* and *con*, on the subject of instrumental music in Church service; some contending that instruments should be used, not

alone, but as an accompaniment to the voice; others maintaining that the music should be strictly vocal.

In this controversy, "the law of the Lord" is, of course, the only arbiter; but a wide difference of opinion exists as to what the Scriptures teach on the subject, as will be seen from the following extracts: Dr. Adam Clarke asks—"Did ever God ordain instruments of music to be used in His worship? Can they be used in Christian assemblies according to the spirit of Christianity? Has Jesus Christ or His Apostles ever commanded or sanctioned the use of them? Were they ever used anywhere in the Apostolic Church? Does the use of them at present in Christian congregations ever increase the spirit of devotion? Does it ever appear that bands of musicians, either in their collective, or individual capacity, are more spiritual, or as spiritual as the other parts of the Christian Church? Is there not more pride, self-will, stubbornness, insubordination, lightness and frivolity, among such persons than among other professors of Christianity found in the same religious community? Is it ever remarked or known, that musicians in the house of God have ever attained to any depth of piety, or superior soundness of understanding, in the things of God? Is it ever found that those Churches and Christian societies which have, and use instruments of music in Divine worship, are more holy, or as

holy as those societies who do not use them? And is it always found that the ministers who recommend them to be used in the worship of God are the most spiritual and useful preachers? Can mere sounds, no matter how melodious, where no sentiment is or can be uttered, be considered as giving praise to God? Is it possible that pipes or strings of any kind can give God praise? Can God be praised with sounds which are emitted by no sentient being, and have in themselves no meaning? If these questions can not be answered in the affirmative, then is not the introduction of such instruments into the worship of God anti-Christian; calculated to debase and ruin the spirit and influence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? And should not all who wish well to the spread of pure and undefiled religion, lift up their hands, their influence and their voice against them?"

The pious and acute Richard Baxter, speaking of music, says: "It is not an instituted ceremony merely, but a natural help to the mind's alacrity; and it is a duty, and not a sin, to use the help of nature and lawful art, though not to institute sacraments of our own. As it is lawful to use the comfortable help of spectacles in reading the Bible, so it is of music, to exhilarate the soul toward God. Jesus Christ joined the Jews in the use of it, and never spoke a word against it. . . . It is not a human invention, as the last Psalm, and many others show, which call us to praise the

Lord with *instruments* of music. Why should the experience of some privileged, self-created person, or half-man, that *knows not what melody is*, be set up against the experience of all others, and deprive them of all such helps and mercies, as these people say they find no benefit by?"

Dr. Gouden, bishop of Exeter, who lived in the time of both the Charleses, says: "Who doubts but that David, and the whole Church of the Jews, served God in spirit and in truth, amid those joyful and harmonious sounds which they made with singers and instruments of music? The gift and use of music is so sweet, so angelical, so heavenly and Divine, that it is a pity God should not have the use of it in His service, and the Church an holy and comfortable use of it. Such an orient pearl ought not to be used only in civil conventions, or abused in wanton carols and vain effusions, which is to put a jewel in a swine's snout. Certainly the Christian Church hath more cause to rejoice than the Jews had."

To the same effect are the sentiments of Bishop Horne, Leigh Richmond, and many others equally distinguished for piety and learning.

"Instrumental music," says the Rev. Richard Watson, "was first introduced into the Jewish service by Moses, and afterward, by the express command of God, was very much improved by the addition of several instruments in the reign of David."

The introduction of instrumental music into the Church service by Moses, was, we suppose, more a matter of inference with Mr. Watson than of knowledge, inasmuch as the Scriptures give no definite information on the subject.

As to the conduct of David, and the authority under which he acted, there should be no controversy. "When David was old and full of days, he made Solomon, his son, king of Israel. And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests, and the Levites," to order and establish the services of the Sanctuary. The Levites were numbered and divided into companies, and to each division, appropriate functions were assigned. Hence, it is said that "four thousand praised the Lord with their instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith. And David divided them into courses."

That David was, at this time, a good man and Divinely inspired, there can be no question; for when Hezekiah restored the temple service which had been neglected during his predecessor's reign, it is said that "he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet, for so was the commandment of the Lord by His prophets." It is, therefore, evident that David, in making his arrangement for instrumental music, acted as a man of God, under Divine

direction, with the concurrence of "Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet." The criticism by which it is attempted to be shown that David acted on his own responsibility in this matter, and against the Divine will, is utterly futile.

The supposition that the prophet Amos censures David for the introduction of musical instruments into the Church, is almost too improbable to deserve notice, and especially as the author, who thus construes the words of the prophet, quotes with approbation the following eulogy on David, written by Mr. Delaney: "To sum up all, David was a true believer, a zealous adorer of God, teacher of His law and worship, and inspirer of His praise. A glorious example, a perpetual and inexhaustible fountain of true piety. A consummate and unequaled hero; a skilful and fortunate captain; a steady patriot; a wise ruler; a faithful, generous and magnanimous friend, and, what is yet rarer, a no less generous and magnanimous enemy. A true penitent; a Divine musician; a sublime poet, and an inspired prophet. By birth, a *peasant*; by merit, a *prince*; in youth a *hero*; in manhood, a *monarch*; and in age, a *saint*."

Among the last acts of David's life, was this ordering of instrumental music in the Sanctuary. This was done in his old age, when he was a *saint*. How, then, could he have contravened the Divine will in a matter of so much importance?

The passage in the book of Amos, which is supposed to be reprehensive of the conduct of David in regard to musical instruments, was written more than two hundred years after David had entered into rest, and by no means requires an interpretation which would censure the "sweet Psalmist."

The prophet addresses the unfaithful Israelites as follows: "Ye that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of music like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."—Amos vi. 4-6.

"This is an elegant description of the bad use men too often make of a plentiful fortune; so that it shuts out all serious consideration, and makes them void of compassion toward persons in want and misery, and to regard nothing but their present gratification. . . . Who, though but private persons, make use of all manner of musical instruments the same as David did when he was a king; and employ as great a variety of music for their own diversion as he did in the service of God."*

*Benson.

This is certainly a reasonable exposition, and should, it would seem, be satisfactory to all.

Moreover, if this official act of David was unauthorized, may not other ordinances of his fall under condemnation; and if his conduct in a case of this sort was reprehensible, how can his writings be received as infallible truth?

Again, the use of instrumental music is inculcated by others of the inspired writers besides David. Are they, also, to be censured?

David sinned grievously, it is true, on a certain occasion, but he sincerely repented and obtained forgiveness. There is not, as we conceive, the slightest ground for the insinuation that he transgressed in the arrangement of the temple service just as he was about to *fall on sleep*, after having "served his generation by the will of God." We reach the conclusion, therefore, that instrumental music, in connection with vocal, was used in the service of God in the olden time with Divine approbation.

The question, then, arises as to its lawfulness and expediency under the Christian dispensation. On this subject, nothing was said, so far as we know, either by Christ or his Apostles.

"After the most diligent inquiry," says the learned Dr. Burney, "concerning the time when instruments of music had admission into the ecclesiastical service, there is reason to conclude that, before the reign of Constantine, as the con-

verts of the Christian religion were subject to frequent persecutions and disturbances in their devotions, the use of instruments would hardly have been allowed; and, by all that can be collected from the writings of the primitive Christians, they seem never to have been admitted. But after the full establishment of Christianity as the national religion of the Roman Empire, they were used in great festivals, in imitation of the Hebrews, as well as pagans, who, at all times, have accompanied their psalms, hymns, and religious rites, with instruments of music."

Why this silence of the New Testament writers, and this abstinence from the use of instrumental music for sacred purposes in the early ages of the Christian Church? Was it a legal ceremony, instituted by Moses, and abolished when the gospel dispensation was initiated? We think not. Instrumental music was devoted to religious uses before the giving of the law. Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, to celebrate the deliverance from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, "took a timbrel in her hand, and the women went out after her with timbrels and dances." Therefore, the custom not having been introduced by the ceremonial law, it is not conclusive that it was abolished when that law was abrogated.

Many of the forms and postures adopted in Divine service under the former dispensation are still continued; why, then, may not this mode of

praising God be allowed? If it were an arbitrary and harsh enactment which derived all its value simply from the appointment of God, and submission to His authority, some would think it might be discontinued without a special revocation. But this is not the case. Good music, whether vocal or instrumental, charms the ear, and can not be regarded as a burden, either to the performer or the listener.

We hold that vocal music partakes as much of a typical character as does instrumental music, and that neither was ever intended to be emblematical of anything but the praises of God in heaven. The argument, then, which would exclude the one on the ground of its being a Levitical ceremony, would also abolish the other. Of what good thing under the Christian dispensation could instrumental music have been typical?

The silence of Christ and His Apostles may, as we conceive, be appropriately urged in favor of its legitimacy in the present day. The gospel was first preached to the Jews. The Apostles sometimes worshiped in synagogues; but we have no intimation that the use of instruments of music in the worship of God as it obtained in the synagogue service was contrary to the spirit of Christianity.

When St. John was permitted to listen to the songs of the celestial choir, he heard "the voice of harpers, harping with their harps." Why, then, should the inhabitants of heaven be represented

as doing that which is not proper to be done on earth?

It may be said that this is figurative language, and that a literal harping is not meant. But if instrumental music be so utterly unsuited to the purposes of worship as some imagine, it is strange, indeed, that it should be made the emblem of Divine worship on high.

Inasmuch, therefore, as instrumental music was allowed in the Church service by Divine authority, and inasmuch as this grant has never been revoked by the Head of the Church, therefore, it is still lawful to use instruments as aids to devotion.

The question, then, becomes one of expediency simply. It is the duty of the Christian to reject whatever is of evil tendency, and to cherish whatever is calculated to advance the Redeemer's kingdom, without demanding in every case express Scriptural warrant. Many things are lawful which are not expedient, and that which was expedient in days gone by may now be inexpedient. The great general principle which is applicable to all times and places is thus enunciated by the Apostle: "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." We are as sacredly bound to refrain from that which is inexpedient as we are to eschew what is positively forbidden in the Scriptures. Without putting it into the category of merely legal ceremonies, there were, doubtless, reasons for its em-

ployment under the Jewish dispensation which do not now exist. In former times, Jerusalem was the great metropolitan city of the Church, and the temple was the grand rallying point for believers throughout the world. Immense multitudes were here assembled, from time to time; and, as much of the singing was responsive, thousands of voices joining in the burden or refrain at the appropriate instant in the exercises, instruments may have been needed to control the immense mass of sound.

Again, under the former dispensation, the senses were more directly appealed to than they are under the auspices of the Christian Church. Then it was meet, not only that the eye should be dazzled by a gorgeously ornamented sanctuary, but also that the ear should be charmed with instrumental, as well as vocal music. Now, although the use of instruments is not forbidden, yet it is thought by many that the human voice unaccompanied best befits the simplicity and spirituality of the gospel.

The following judicious advice was long ago given to the Methodists by John Wesley: "Let no organ be placed anywhere till proposed in the Conference." This distinguished minister of Christ believed in the legitimacy of instrumental music in Divine worship, even in these latter times; otherwise he would have uttered an emphatic voice against it. The Conference could not have legal-

ized that which was forbidden in the Scriptures. Still, as the New Testament evidently does not *require* the use of organs, and as many of the people were opposed to them, precipitate and arbitrary measures in the premises could only do harm. It was inexpedient to introduce organs into the churches until the prejudices against them were, in the judgment of the Conference, sufficiently allayed to admit of their favorable reception.

In the year 1811, there was some controversy in Liverpool in regard to organs in two of the churches in that city. The question was discussed in the Wesleyan Conference; the introduction of organs into both churches was sanctioned, and no mischief followed.

Dr. Lowell Mason says: "A judicious accompaniment seems to be indispensable to complete success. Such an accompaniment guides, sustains, strengthens, and relieves the vocal parts. It promotes good tone and correct intonation, and renders vocal music pleasing and effective. But the art of accompaniment seems to be as little understood and as much abused by instrumentalists as is the art of singing by vocalists."

"The organ," says the Rev. J. R. Scott, "not only adds sweetness, variety, and compass to the song, but is highly useful in sustaining the singers' voices, promoting accuracy of pitch and time. . . . Only let its effect be, not to smother and overpower,

but to enhance the force of the sentiment sung."

We freely admit that the highest degree of musical gratification can not be afforded without the aid of instruments; but we contend, nevertheless, that in congregational singing, "complete success" may be achieved without them. We are by no means disposed to admit that the best effect of the service of song can only be realized when the music is faultless, or when its charms are such as to lead us captive.

A high authority says: "Music is an exceedingly absorbing thing; and, particularly in its more embellished and elaborate form, it naturally withdraws attention from all else, even from the words associated with it, and concentrates the mind upon itself."

An American traveler in Germany, a few years since, asked, in what Church he could find the best music. The answer was: "There is no music here, except once or twice a year, on the occasion of some great festival." "But, do not the people sing in Church?" "O, yes; they sing hymns, but there is no music."

Here was a clear distinction between mere musical enjoyment and the praise of God in song. In all our meditations upon this subject, let the idea of *worship* be prominent. Congregational singing should, of course, be good; it should please the ear, inform the mind, and affect the heart. It should always appropriately embody

the sentiment, and this, we think, can be successfully done by the voice alone.

A chorister whose talent, knowledge, and experience, will not enable him to pitch the tune correctly without adventitious aids, had better give place to a more competent leader. A congregation of worshipers who can not maintain the proper key, or a correct intonation, through the tune, especially when assisted by a well trained choir placed in their midst, had better give attention to the rudiments of music; or, if they will be patient, practice alone will enable them to overcome many difficulties. Who of us has not frequently heard melodious, harmonious, soul-stirring singing—singing that was in the highest degree effective—where there was no instrumental accompaniment?

It is said that “a good organ may be made an invaluable aid to congregational singing, as is proved all over the continent of Europe, where the most majestic music is made by the people following the lead of the organ, and frequently without the help of a choir.”

We suppose that Germany is here especially referred to. All that can be affirmed by our author is, that where musical education prevails, the people sing well with the aid of an organ. We will here take the responsibility of affirming, that, where the people are musically educated, they can sing well *without* the help of an instru-

ment. We thus reach the conclusion that an instrument is not indispensably necessary.

A great difficulty lies in the fact that, in America especially, musical education has been too much ignored. Hence, in procuring organists, and other instrumental performers, the Churches frequently have recourse to the opera or the theatre! To mention the custom is to condemn it.

To show what likelihood there is of obtaining for the Churches suitable performers, we give the following portrait of a good organist: "An ability to play well is not the only qualification needed in an organist. He should be a pious man, or at least one who has a deep sense of the solemnity of public worship. He should be a man of quick sensibility, or he will neither enter into the spirit of the words sung, nor of the other exercises. He must be a man of good judgment, or he will make the most fatal mistakes in accompanying such hymns as call forth, in different stanzas, emotions of a different character. He should understand the nature of his instrument and the object of its introduction into the Church, as an accompaniment to the voices—subservient to vocal effect, or rather designed to promote it. Were such organists employed, there would be fewer complaints of loud and meaningless playing—of long, flourishing and fanciful interludes, foreign to the subject, and unfit for the Church."

The organ is too large and too expensive for

most of the Churches in America, and hence, the temptation to introduce smaller instruments of various sorts. The historian exhibits to us the unhappy results of such a state of things. Going back thirty years from the present to scenes which he witnessed in some churches on this side of the Atlantic, he says, after speaking of the clarionet, bassoon, hautboy, etc., that "to tune the bass-viol with these variable instruments caused much necessary, and more unnecessary sawing and snapping of strings and squeaking of the wind instruments, to the no small annoyance of hearers. . . . This exercise of tuning could be borne with, for once, at the commencement of worship; but this was not the end—they must be tried and proved before each singing. . . . Soon there came a struggle between voices and instruments, and the instruments struggled for mastery among themselves The strings of the double-bass, when that was introduced, must be sawed with such violence that the crash of the string on the finger-board made a more conspicuous noise than the vibration. This display, added to the tuning of the instruments, while the minister was reading the hymn, if not during other services, must have been of wonderful assistance to his devotional feelings!"

It is admitted by some that the organ is unsuited to times of revival, social religious meetings, and sacramental services. At such seasons,

Christians are wont to dispense with all unnecessary forms, that they may worship God with that earnestness, simplicity, and faith which bring blessings upon the soul. But why should not this same fervor of spirit always characterize believers when they enter the Sanctuary? "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." In the great congregation, let the hearts of the faithful be so fired with a holy zeal as to send out a genial warmth upon the entire assembly. Interludes and voluntaries on the organ, and the general predominance of sound over sentiment, tend to cool the ardor of devotion. Divine service must have its forms, even under this dispensation of the Spirit; but dalliance and parade in the service should be avoided. The multitude, it is true, should be attracted, but not with gorgeous displays and merely sensuous enjoyments. There is that in "*newness of spirit*" which will more favorably, and more powerfully impress the popular heart than all the paraphernalia that art can devise.

It is contended by many judicious and faithful members of the Church that, while we should resolutely oppose the use of unbecoming forms and ceremonies in religious services, it is, nevertheless, our duty to make the worship as pleasing and attractive as its peculiar nature will allow. It is urged that the effect of instrumental music, especially upon the young, is most beneficial; and that

it is our duty to use all legitimate means to attach them to that Church which we prefer. The church edifice should be neat and imposing; the preaching should not only be evangelical, but popular; and the music in the church should be such as to edify and satisfy persons whose taste has been properly directed and cultivated.

Moreover, the cabinet organs, so much, and so successfully used in many of the smaller churches throughout the country, render nugatory much that has been said in regard to the difficulty of procuring proper organists; inasmuch as there are, in most places, ladies connected with the Church who are competent and willing to perform on these instruments. Experience, too, has done much toward meeting the objections which have been urged against the use of instrumental music in the Church. With the most determined opposers, one year's probation is often sufficient to extirpate prejudice, and to enroll them with the advocates of the organ.

In many churches, the introduction of an instrument would evidently be inexpedient; but where circumstances favor, we are inclined to the opinion that there should be, as the best arrangement possible, an organ and a choir to lead in the song; and that all the people should stand up with book in hand, containing both the words and the notes, that they may unite in the singing, understandingly, heartily, spiritually.

CHAPTER VI.

SPIRITUAL SINGING.

The Young Convert — Are we Prepared to Sing in Heaven — Indifference — The Psalmist Praised God Heartily — Ardor of the Apostles and Early Christians — Heartfelt Song should Celebrate the later Triumphs of the Cross — Formality in Singing the Great Evil — Science in Singing should be Recognized

The question still recurs—How should we sing? The answer is—with a reverential, believing, loving, joyful, thankful heart. While the carnal mind has dominion over us, we can not properly praise God. We may hear the gospel, and sing and pray, as the means of conversion; but we can not perform acts of worship while the heart is unchanged. We must wait patiently for the Lord; we must cry unto Him; He must take our feet out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set us upon a rock. Then it is that we are prepared to sing the “new song.” The young convert lifts up his voice and exclaims, “O Lord, I will praise Thee: though thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and song; He also is become my salvation.”

Do we possess the spirit of praise? This is the

important question which each one of us should propound to his own heart. This glad, enrapturing spirit animates all the heavenly hosts; and, on earth, it fires the souls of all who are traveling to Zion. It is manifest, therefore, that destitution of this spirit of adoring love furnishes just cause for alarm. If we are unprepared to unite in the worship-song in houses made with hands, how shall we unite with the millions who throng the courts of the upper Sanctuary? What though our Heavenly Father looked in boundless compassion upon our fallen race; what though Jesus our Savior died on the Cross for the sins of the world; what though the Comforter has come to abide with the Church; what though the Bible, the preached word, the sacraments, and the influence of holy example, are all ours; what though the heavenly Jerusalem stands in imperishable beauty and grandeur, with her jeweled walls, her gates of pearl, her trees perennially green and fruitful, her flowers of immortal fragrance, her azure skies, her Sun that never goes down, and her countless companies of shining, rejoicing worshipers, with their everlasting songs of celestial sweetness—it is plain that we never can enter there without hearts attuned to praise.

Having received the Spirit of adoption, we must hold constant communion with God, that we may be prepared to worship Him in this life and in that which is to come.

Prayer and praise must be conjoined. "O Lord, open Thou our lips, and our mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

It is painful to see the indifference which is frequently manifested by many who profess to be worshipers. Hear Him who abhors a soulless offering: "This people draw near to Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me." Hear Him speaking to the careless formalist: "Take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols."

" God is a Spirit just and wise,
He sees our inmost mind;
In vain to heaven we raise our cries,
And leave our souls behind."

Dr. Adam Clarke says that a good singer, who has not the life of God in his soul, is *vox et præterea nihil*.* But another author thinks there is something more, and reminds us that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Singing is a highly expressive art; it purports to be the outgushing of the soul. Therefore, singing which has no emotion in it is evidently a cold and barren failure.

We need scarcely remark that in every attempt to worship God, there should be a vivid consciousness of the solemnity and importance of the act; that thoughts of business or of pleasure, thoughts

* A voice, and besides it—nothing.

of the multitude who may be present, thoughts of the elegance of the poetry, or the excellence of the music—all thoughts of all things—should be swallowed up in the great thought that God is in us and around us, and that He is infinitely worthy of our adoration.

We are to be “rooted and grounded in love.” Love is the genial soil from which are to spring the sweet flowers and wholesome fruits of obedience and resignation, gratitude and joy. It is love which animates the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, in their ceaseless songs around the throne. “The love of Christ constraineth us,” is the experience of all the faithful on earth; and without love, or the desire for it, all our singing is but “as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal;” a *noise* which God would have removed from Him.

How repeatedly and emphatically do the Scriptures denounce a merely formal religion! How urgently do they inculcate the necessity of holiness of heart, and fervency of spirit! If we ourselves demand hearty sincerity in the thanks which are offered to us for the favors we confer, how much more has God a right to require us to worship Him “in spirit and in truth!”

The “monarch minstrel” sang and worshiped with seraphic ardor.

Hear the Psalmist as he exclaims: “I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart.”

"I will praise Thee with all my heart."

"Glory ye in His holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord."

"Serve the Lord with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart."

"O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise even with my glory."

"I will be glad and rejoice in Thee: I will sing praise to Thy name, O Thou most high."

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name."

"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being."

The apostles would also lead us into the experience of this same glowing love, transporting joy, and exultant hope: "Be filled with the Spirit"—"making melody in your heart to the Lord"—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom"—"singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"—"I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

"Without Me," says the Savior, "ye can do nothing. If we would pray, 'the Spirit of grace and supplications' must be poured out upon us. 'The Spirit helpeth our infirmities.' So, if we would sing acceptably, this same Holy Spirit must excite within us ardent desires and grateful emo-

tions. God will assuredly accept the sacrifice which Himself moves us to offer.

The spirit of the apostles and the primitive Christians was a loving, jubilant spirit. Though beaten with stripes, stoned, imprisoned, banished to dreary solitudes, counted "the filth and off-scouring of all things," expecting to lay down their lives for the truth; yet, forbearing to murmur, they wandered over the world sowing precious seed, "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer such things," and, with ecstatic songs, antedating their arrival at their Father's house. With them praise was *habitual*.

The twelve gazed steadfastly into heaven as long as they could see aught of the radiant cloud-chariot which conducted their ascending Lord to His home of glory; and having received the promise of His second advent, they returned to Jerusalem with joy, and "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."

The disciples, after the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit, "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God."

This same rapturous spirit should characterize all Christians in the present day. The Comforter has come to abide with believers forever. Vital Christianity is shedding its cheering light upon the dark places of the earth. False religions are tottering to their fall. Judaism, Romanism, Paganism, and Mohammedanism, are all dying of in-

herent weakness and old age ; while pure religion, in youthful vigor, and with gigantic strides, marches on to conquest, and by faith sees—

“ Her flag on every height unfurl’d;
Her morning drum beat round the world.”

In this glad day of holy triumph, shall Christian zeal abate, or Christian courage fail? Shall a deadly paralysis seize the Church just as the trumpet-tongued voice of victory is about to startle the universe with its echoes? Surely Emmanuel’s hosts will march valiantly forth to the great decisive conflict. This is the day which Abraham saw and was glad, and shall not our hearts burn within us? and shall not our songs herald forth our irrepressible joy? With all our sins and sorrows, this is a bright and glorious era, and the hosannas of believers should be correspondingly rapturous.

In the Methodist Discipline, the question has long been asked—“How shall we guard against formality in singing?” And the several items of direction quoted in a former chapter from the Discipline, are all given in answer to this important question. The Church justly concludes that formality effectually vitiates the service—that while the faults in our congregational singing may be numerous and grievous, the great fault, and the one which embraces all others, is formality. The question is now as pertinent, and as worthy of consideration, as it ever was. Let us, *i. e.*, both

the writer and the reader, ask ourselves—"How may we guard against formality in singing?"

The following is especially worthy of consideration: "Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. This naturally tends to formality, and is brought in by those who have either very strong or very weak voices."

Those who have very strong voices are, of course, able to overpower the rest of the singers, and to lead them at will. It is not unfrequently the case that great strength and great indolence meet together in the same individual. Persons whose voices are very weak are but too prone to lag behind, and the effect is to produce coldness, heaviness, dullness. They retard the song, as invalids hanging upon the rear of an army impede the progress of the advancing hosts.

Slow singing is sometimes the cause, and sometimes the effect of formality, and obtains in many of our churches, to the great detriment of the worshipers. There is in us a natural disposition to be at ease—to take our time—and this habitual laziness too often pervades and ruins our devotions.

Here let science be recognized as the handmaid of religion. While thoughtless rapidity is to be avoided, let us carefully eschew a dozy, drawling style of singing. We hesitate not to affirm that incalculable advantage would result to the American Churches by the banishment of this pernicious

custom of tardy singing, and the observance of the time which marks the productions of scientific composers. A great reform is needed at this point, and blessings will be upon the heads of those by whom it is effected.

SECTION III—WHAT SHOULD WE SING?

CHAPTER I.

SHOULD WE SING PSALMS EXCLUSIVELY?

Presumption in favor of Compositions of Uninspired Poets — View of the Seceders — The Title of the Psalms — “Song of Songs” — Ralph Erskine’s View and Conduct — Suitableness of Matter for Praise — Testimony of Isaiah — Offering Strange Fire — “Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs” — Example of Simeon, Anna the Prophetess, etc. — Early Christians — Common Version and Rous’ Compared — General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

If we are to use words in singing, and if these words are made especially influential by the sounds to which they are wedded, then the character of the sentiments expressed becomes a matter of the utmost importance. Where are we to find poetry adapted to the purposes of sacred song? What do the Scriptures teach on the subject? Nearly all the Churches use, in the service of praise, those compositions of uninspired poets which are thought to be in accord with the teachings of the Old and New Testaments. This having long been the custom, there is a presumption in its favor, and it is for those who

entertain the contrary view to show that the prevailing practice is unscriptural.

The Seceders* from the Established Church of Scotland and their descendants, the ministers and members of the Associate Reform Church, contend that, in our devotional singing, we are bound to confine ourselves exclusively to a literal version of the Book of Psalms; and, consequently, that all those who use the compositions of men are guilty of grave error, both in theory and in practice. For the support of this allegation, we certainly have a right to demand irrefragable Scriptural authority.

The opposers of the exclusive system gladly admit that the Book of Psalms constitutes a part of the word of God; that the Psalms were designed to be sung in the Church under the Jewish dispensation, and that most of them, when properly versified, have high claims as sacred lyrics, even in the present day. It is glaringly unjust to charge the advocates of the liberal view with the sin of rejecting the Psalms, or of supplanting them by unauthorized human productions. On the contrary, the Psalms are highly prized and jealously guarded as an integral part of the sacred canon. The only question in controversy is—Should we sing Psalms exclusively?

Our Seceder friends argue that the Psalms were

*We use the term "Seceder" in this chapter with the utmost respect for those who are designated by it. Other Scottish Churches agree with them.

written by inspired men to be sung in the Church ; that they were appointed to be sung by Divine authority ; that this appointment has never been revoked ; that the Head of the Church has never authorized the use of any other songs in His worship, and that the Psalms are, therefore, to be sung to the end of time, to the exclusion of all other compositions.

The following is one of the chief passages of Scripture adduced in favor of this theory : "Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer."* This command was given by this pious sovereign when he reformed the temple service ; and, as has been well said, the verse and the chapter prove too much for the purpose of the Seceders. In verse twenty-fifth, it is said that "Hezekiah set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet." If the former quotation contains a Divine warrant for the exclusive use of the words of David and Asaph in sacred song in all ages ; then, upon the same principle of interpretation, the latter passage positively enjoins the use of instruments of music in all church-singing to the end of time. In the former case, Hezekiah and the princes command the use of the

* 2 Chronicles xxix. 30.

words of David and Asaph. In the latter case, both Gad the seer, and Nathan the prophet, unite with David in ordaining the use of musical instruments; so that if there is any difference, the obligation to employ cymbals, psalteries and harps, at all times when we sing praises to God, is greater than the obligation to restrict our singing to the Book of Psalms. The advocates of the exclusive doctrine admit that we are not required to use instruments of music; yea, they as a general rule, strongly disapprove of the introduction of these instruments into the Church, although they are called in the Scriptures, "musical instruments of God." We see, therefore, that the chief proof-text upon which they rely utterly fails to sustain their position.

It is obvious that Hezekiah himself did not act upon the principle which is so strenuously contended for by these brethren. On his recovery from sickness, thirteen years after he had issued the order to sing the words of David and Asaph, Hezekiah composed a song, or songs, and he declares, "We will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." * This conduct of the good king, demonstrates the fact that he did not understand his own ordinance as it is understood by the Seceders.

Furthermore, the command of Hezekiah to sing

* Isaiah xxxviii. 20.

the words of David and Asaph, even if interpreted according to the exclusive view, fails to establish the strange position which has been assumed. David wrote upward of seventy of the Psalms, and to Asaph are ascribed ten or twelve; the others are attributed to Moses, Heman, Jeduthun, Solomon, and others. It is urged that the entire Book, which contains one hundred and fifty Psalms, constitutes the true Psalmody of the Church. But the decree of Hezekiah only embraces those which were written by David and Asaph; and as there are at least sixty in the collection which were not composed by these authors, the injunction of the king falls utterly short of establishing the hypothesis of the Seceders.

Our brethren further argue, that the *title* which has been given to the Book in question, indicates the correctness of their doctrine: it is called PSALMS or SONGS, and hence, we are to infer that it was given to the Church to be her only "Psalm Book" through every period of her history. We respectfully submit that the premise is too narrow to support the conclusion. Even if we were to admit that the word Psalms is always to be interpreted Songs, the only proper conclusion would be that the Psalms were designed to be sung in the Church. It would by no means follow that the Psalms are to be perpetually and exclusively used.

But let us inquire more particularly into the

meaning of the word Psalms. Does the original Hebrew word *Tehillim*, which is translated Psalms, invariably or generally, signify Songs? It does not, only as the genus includes the species. Its proper meaning is Praise; hence, the Book of Psalms is properly denominated the Book of Praises, including the praise which is rendered in song, and praise in various other forms. Therefore, the learned have classified the Psalms, as follows: Prayers, sixty-six; Songs of Thanksgiving, twenty-nine; Songs of Praise and Adoration, thirty; Psalms on general topics of instruction, forty; ten are prophetical, and three historical. Such are the component parts of this Book of *Praises*. The Catechism, used by the Seceders, teaches us that "in our prayers we praise God," and it is manifest that He may be praised in all the ways indicated in the foregoing classification. The particular titles of some of the Psalms, as well as their subject-matter, plainly show that they are not all songs. The seventeenth is designated a "Prayer of David," and the ninetieth the "Prayer of Moses." It is evident from all these considerations, and also from the etymology of the word, that the Book of Psalms is properly the Book of Praises, and not the Book of Songs exclusively.

The fact that it is called the Book of Psalms in the New Testament does not militate against this view of the subject. The New Testament writers

quoted from the Greek Septuagint translation, and not from the original Hebrew. In other instances besides the one under consideration, they made citations from the Septuagint that are obviously not in accordance with the original Hebrew, but only where the blunders of the Greek translation were such as not to weaken the special proofs for which the quotations were made.

But what shall we say of the Song of Solomon? Suppose we admit that the word Psalms means Songs only, and that it is thus demonstrated that the Book of Psalms is the true and only Psalmody of the Church, do we not involve ourselves in inextricable difficulty? The Canticles not only bear the general title—Song—but Solomon's Song is said to be THE SONG OF SONGS, or the most excellent of songs! According to this reasoning, we must sing the Book of Psalms always and *exclusively*, and we must also *especially* sing Solomon's Song, always and *exclusively*! As a substitute for this transparent absurdity, we present the reasonable proposition, that wherever matter for praise is suggested, whether in the Old or New Testament, we are fully at liberty to appropriate it; and, as the advocate of this view, we quote the eminent Ralph Erskine, one of the founders of the Seceder Presbytery in Scotland. He says: "When the motion was made of turning *all the Scripture songs* into common metre, *for the same use with the Psalms of David* I was also urged to make a

version of this song," i. e., the Song of Solomon. He further says in reference to the same Book: "If more seem to be said upon any verse than is *directly imported* in it, I hope it will be reckoned no great fault, if what is said be deducible from it, or necessary for the further explication of it, and for adapting this *paraphrase* upon an Old Testament song to a New Testament dispensation." Let it, therefore, be borne in mind that this distinguished scholar and divine of the Secession Church teaches us that we are not bound to confine ourselves, in our songs of praise, to the Book of Psalms, and that we are by no means required to sing a literal version of any portion of the Scriptures.

But it may be said that the Song of Solomon was never used in the temple worship. That being the case, the position that the title, Psalm, or Song, imposes no obligation upon us to use the Book of Psalms exclusively, is fully established.

It is urged, too, that the character of the matter embraced in the Book of Psalms indicates that it was designed to be the only Psalm Book of the Church. We claim a place in the front rank of those who extol the Psalms, yet, we would not perpetrate the error of exalting them above all other portions of the word of God. We have already seen the variety of topics treated on in the Psalms: it might reasonably be supposed that, in the wide range of subjects, some portions

of this delightful Book would be less suited to purposes of praise than some other portions of the Holy Scriptures.

Compare passages in the sixty-ninth Psalm with the sublime Doxologies recorded in the Apostolic Epistles. The Psalmist, predicting the wrath which awaited the enemies of Christ, says :

“Let their table become a snare before them ; and that which should have been for their welfare let it become a trap.

“Let their eyes be darkened that they see not ; and make their loins continually to shake.

“Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

“Let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents.

“ Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.”

Thus saith the Apostle : “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” He says again : “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

Judge of the merits of that theory which incorporates the former verses into the Psalmody of the Church of Christ, while it rejects these spiritual and rapturous utterances.

This mere inference as to superior suitableness, even if it were legitimate, could, of course, prove nothing.

Before we abandon our Hymn Books to take up Rous' version of the Psalms, for the reason that the version is better adapted to the purposes of worship, let us take a specimen from each. We quote first from

THE VERSION.

The preacher rises in the pulpit and gives out:

"I like an owl in desert am
That nightly there doth moan,
I watch, and like a sparrow am
On the house-top alone.
My bitter en'mies all the day
Reproaches cast on me;
And being mad at me, with rage
Against me sworn they be."

Let us now read a part of

THE HYMN,

which is only the representative of a class:

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!
"My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim—
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honors of Thy name.
"Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace."

We can not consent to ignore the testimony of the prophet Isaiah on the subject which we are now discussing. The fact that this inspired man plainly dissents from the view of our Seceder brethren should settle the question. If he had believed as they do, he would certainly have used and recommended the Psalms as the only authorized songs of praise. But, so far from this, he himself writes a song and prophetically enjoins that it shall be sung "in that day," the glorious gospel day which he saw in the distance. He says:

"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: we have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." *

The prophet also gives us another song to be used "in that day." The theory which we oppose utterly forbids the singing of these songs in Divine worship.

But what shall we say as to suitableness of matter. It has been said, as a reason why we should sing the Psalms only, that they are "full of Christ." We think we can easily prove by our Seceder brethren themselves that their theory is incorrect. They argue that the Psalms

* Isaiah xxvi. 1-4.

are "full of Christ;" therefore, they should constitute the only psalmody of the Church. We reply that the Book of the prophecy of Isaiah is "full of Christ;" and, therefore, upon their own principle, the Book of Isaiah should constitute the only psalmody of the Church.

We duly appreciate the glowing delineations of the coming Messiah which endear the Psalms to the pious heart; but we can not admit that David and the rest of the Psalm writers had clearer views of Christ than were entertained and expressed by "the evangelical prophet."

We might challenge the friends who differ with us to point to any other portion of the Old Testament where the character and work of the Redeemer are as explicitly set forth as they are in the prophecy of Isaiah. In that sublime book of the Scriptures, the great doctrines of salvation are clearly taught. Christ is there evidently set forth before us in His Divinity and in His humanity; in the lowly circumstances of His birth and life, and especially in His vicarious death. This is the great central doctrine in the system of Christianity; and if we would exult in the glorious truth that "by His stripes we are healed," we have only to read and appropriate the fifty-third chapter of this gospel prophecy. How can we be blamed for rejecting a theory which requires us to believe that David was more evangelical than Isaiah?

Again, it is urged that we have no authority

for making and singing hymns, although they be thoroughly Scriptural. Our songs, it is said, have already been prepared for us by Divine direction, and we have no authority in the premises further than to prepare and sing a metrical and literal version of these psalms. But who collected the Psalms into one book by the appointment of God, for the express purpose of giving to the Church in all ages a form of words to be used in praise? This question has never been answered, nor can it be. It is *supposed* that the compilation was the work of Ezra; but who can positively tell? And where is the evidence that the compiler himself used this book only, in the service of praise, and that this exclusive theory was to be binding for all time to come?

It has been seriously intimated that those who sing hymns other than the versified Psalms are guilty of the sin of offering strange fire before the Lord, and are liable to the punishment which was inflicted upon Nadab and Abihu. Surely they who thus speak ought to give us a Divine warrant for the dogma to which they attach so much importance, and the rejection of which is likely, in their view, to be attended with fatal consequences. Even the inspired writers did not venture, without Divine sanction, to anathematize those who differed with them. Our friends who so emphatically warn us of our danger have at-

tempted to give their authority, but with what success we have already seen.

What right, we may ask, have we to pray or preach in our own words? The answer which our Seceder brethren would give is, that prayer is a Christian duty; that preaching is a Divinely established institution; and that, while all our praying and preaching are to be based upon the Scriptures, we are, nevertheless, at liberty to use such forms of prayer and sermonizing as to us may seem best, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But why may we not adopt this principle in regard to singing, especially, as we have in the Bible no required forms of praise? This plea having been set aside, there can be no other plausible one, unless it be to the effect that we must confine ourselves to the Psalms to avoid the errors in doctrine which may creep into the hymns composed by uninspired men. But how does it happen that we are more liable to error in singing than in preaching and praying? Has not almost every phase and shade of heterodoxy had its apologist and advocate in the pulpit? And if there is a great power in song to make the sentiments uttered influential, what are we to say of the preaching of the eloquent orator, who, with great logical and rhetorical ability, addresses the multitude?

Is there no danger of heterodoxy in extemporaneous, or written prayers?—prayers composed by

men? We have the answer in the semi-idolatrous petitions to the saints, and the prayers for the dead, which are offered up in the Romish Church. If, then, to promote orthodoxy, we should refrain from composing and singing hymns, we ought, on the same principle, to refrain from preaching and praying, unless the service be conducted in the words of inspiration.

The course pursued by our anti-hymn singing friends does not afford the slightest guarantee against error in doctrine. The fact that the language of the Psalms is sometimes obscure and often typical, renders it necessary, in the judgment of the Associate Reform ministers, to lecture on the Psalm before it is sung, whenever circumstances are favorable for exposition. The explanation given is, of course, received and borne in mind during the singing. Now, what security have we against false doctrine in the lecture, and, consequently, in the understanding which pervades the singing? Our Hymn Books are generally compiled by our ablest and best men, and are adopted by the highest ecclesiastical authority. This, it would seem, would be as effectual a safeguard against error as the most zealous defender of the faith could demand. The explications given of the Psalms, from time to time, before singing, are, from the very nature of the case, much more likely to propagate heresy than the hymns used in the Churches. If we

wanted to foster Judaism, that deadly error which the apostles combated with so great zeal and success, we might reasonably suppose that the use of an exclusively Jewish psalmody would tend to such a result. We plead the Arianism of the Seceders of Ulster, as a significant illustration of the fact that Psalm singing affords no security against the embracement and advocacy of unscriptural doctrines.

But we have not space to reply to the minor objections which have been urged against the custom of hymn-singing; nor is it necessary to assail the pigmies after having grappled with the giants.

We confidently abide at our stand-point, and claim a complete vindication, on the ground that no valid objection can be urged against the composing and singing of hymns embodying the doctrines of Christianity, this practice of the Churches being eminently Scriptural.

The positive evidence that our hymns may be founded upon any portion of God's word, and especially upon the New Testament, is abundant. It is said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*

No language could possibly set this whole subject in a clearer light than is shed upon it by

* Col. iii. 16.

these words of the Apostle. It is surprising to see that the abortive attempt has been made to evade its force by showing that the Apostle meant only the Psalms, when he says: "Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs." The idea is that in the Book of Psalms, there are "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," the peculiar characteristics of each being slightly different. As it regards the philological argument, it is enough for us to say without going into details, that the Seceder interpretation represents the Apostle as directing us to sing psalms, psalms, and psalms! or to make the best of it, psalms, and psalms, and spiritual songs. He who can receive such an interpretation, let him receive it. We confess that we are curious to know how the friends who differ from us ever arrived at the certain knowledge that the Apostle meant only the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs contained in the Book of Psalms, to the exclusion of all other inspired songs, as well as the songs and hymns of human composition.

If St. Paul meant simply the Psalms, it is marvelous that he should have commenced by exhorting the Colossians thus: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Can we suppose that the phrase, "word of Christ," was the most apt expression which the Apostle could use to designate the Psalms of David? By "the word of Christ," he must have meant the teachings of Christ and the evangelists and apostles—the doctrines of

salvation as revealed faintly in the Old Testament, and vividly in the New. It is incredible that the Apostle intended to enjoin it upon us to have the mind fixed upon the New Testament teachings—to have the word of Christ dwelling in our hearts richly—while at the same time we were forbidden to sing the words of Christ, and required to go back to the days and writings of David for words to be used in song. Let it not be forgotten that he puts in the word “spiritual”—“spiritual songs”—as it would seem, for the express purpose of guarding us against the error into which, as we conceive, our anti-hymn brethren have fallen. If we adopt their view, we must bravely surmount all difficulties, and reach the conclusion that the Apostle used all the words contained in the verse under examination simply to teach us that it is our duty to sing the Psalms exclusively. We prefer to take the passage in its plain and obvious meaning. According to the acknowledged rules of interpretation, it triumphantly sustains the theory and practice of nearly all the denominations of Christians in the world.

We are directed to teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. But what are we to teach? Of course, the lessons embraced in our songs must be taken from the Scriptures. But, from what part? From the Book of Psalms alone? The Apostle gives us a satisfactory answer. It is as follows: “All

Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”* These two passages taken together give us a clear view of the subject. This last one can not be understood as referring to the Old Testament alone. Most of the New Testament was extant at the time the Apostle wrote this Epistle to Timothy, and even those Books of the sacred canon which were not then written were evidently included prospectively in the term—“All Scripture.”

In singing spiritual songs apart from the Psalms, we are only following the example of good old Simeon, Anna the prophetess, Mary the mother of Jesus, and, doubtless, all the primitive Christians. Yea, our course is vindicated by the example of those whom St. John saw “in the midst of the throne.” They sang a new song—a song that recognized and adored Christ as already come, and as having finished His work and entered into His glory. They cried—“*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.*”† Shall we refuse to sing this song which is sung by “every creature in heaven?” This refusal is demanded by the system of psalmody which we oppose.

The early Christians, no doubt, sang the Old Testament Psalms, together with hymns and spiritual songs suggested by the Scriptures of the New Testament. Basil of the fourth century cites

* II Timothy iii. 16.

† Rev. vi. 12.

a hymn which was then said to be *very ancient*. It is translated by Dr. Pye Smith, as follows: "Jesus Christ—joyful light of the Holy! Glory of the eternal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father! Having now come to the setting of the sun—beholding the evening light, we praise the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit of God. Thou art worthy to be praised of sacred voices, at all seasons, O Son of God, Who givest life. Wherefore the universe glorifieth Thee!"

There are other hymns extant equally ancient. It was of such hymns that Clemens of Alexandria, about A. D. 175, wrote as follows: "Gather together the children to praise the Leader of children, the eternal *Logos*, the eternal Light, the Fountain of mercy. Filled with the dew of the Spirit, let us sing sincere praises, genuine hymns to Christ our King."

At a later period, it is said of the martyr Jerome that "as he went to execution he sang the Apostles' creed and the hymns of the Church, with a loud voice and a cheerful countenance. He kneeled at the stake and prayed. Being then bound, he raised his voice and sang a paschal hymn, then much in vogue in the Church:

"Hail! happy day, and ever be adored,
When hell was conquered by great heaven's Lord."

The younger Pliny, who lived in the beginning of the second century, having inquired into the assemblies of the Christians in order to give an

account of them to the Emperor Trajan, informs him that he could learn nothing of their sacraments, but that they assembled in the morning before daylight to sing a hymn to Christ, as to a god.

“The ‘psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs’ of the Apostolic Churches, were an outgushing of the new spirit of Christianity, which does not seem to have restricted itself to the ancient songs of the temple, or of the synagogue. Even the miraculous endowments of the first Christian age appear to have manifested one class of their phenomena in the inspired improvisation of Psalms. The earliest Christian historians agree in affirming, that the Christian communities of their times employed in Divine worship, not only the Psalms and other metrical passages of the Old Testament, but also hymns, original to the age, and which the religious character of the times demanded for its own expression. Tertullian states, that each participant in the ancient *agapæ*, was invited at the close of the feast to sing as he might prefer, ‘either from the Holy Scriptures, or from the dictates of his own spirit, a song of adoration to God.’”

Hymns and spiritual songs, as well as the Psalms, were sung by the Waldenses, and other Christian communities, during the eclipse of faith which marked the mediæval ages. We have seen with what spirit and success hymns were composed and sung by Luther and others during the

great Reformation. Passing over a number of authors, we come down to the days of Isaac Watts, who was succeeded in the great work of hymn-writing by Charles Wesley.

We review the history of the hymn-singing Churches of the present day with grateful emotions. Our Heavenly Father does not treat us as if we were guilty of daring presumption; but, by causing His face to shine upon us, He is continually increasing our weight of obligation to Him, and is, as it were, calling upon us to sing unto Him "a new song."

We propose, now, to inquire more particularly into the practice of the Seceders. Do they act on their own principle? That principle is thus enunciated: "A correct and faithful version of the whole Book of Psalms should be exclusively employed in the psalmody of the Church to the end of time." Rous' version is regarded as being "correct and faithful." A champion in the cause of exclusive Psalmody tells us that this version "was adopted upon the principle that it is a faithful translation of the original text." Again, he says, that "this version is not an explanation, but a *translation* of the Psalms." It and the prose translation "are both to be regarded as the word of God."

Hence, the anti-Seceders are charged with the sin of "rejecting the Psalm-Book which God has given, and preferring their own effusions." They

are solemnly warned that the course which they are pursuing "involves an impious rejection of the Psalms which God has given to his Church, as unfit to be sung, and the substitution of hymns of man's composure." The position is, therefore, strenuously advocated, that we have no authority for singing anything but the pure word of God, as contained in the Book of Psalms;" "the inspired Psalm-Book;" "a correct and faithful translation;" "a *literal* translation." To sing anything else is to expose ourselves to condemnation for rejecting "God's Psalter." Let us judge of the Psalmody of these brethren by their own standard. It is easy to see that Rous has made many and large additions to the inspired word. We turn to the one hundred and second Psalm.

PROSE TRANSLATION.

I am like a pelican in the wilderness.

I am like an owl of the desert.

Because of Thy indignation and Thy wrath.

ROUS' VERSION.

Like a pelican in the wilderness,
Forsaken I have been.

I like an owl in desert am,
That nightly there doth moan.

Thy wrath and indignation
Did cause this grief and pain.

It will be seen that, in Rous' version, at least one-half is "mere human composition."

Let us examine the one hundred and fifth psalm.

PROSE TRANSLATION.

Seek the Lord and His strength,
seek His face evermore.

ROUS' VERSION.

The Lord *Almighty*, and His
strength,

*With steadfast hearts seek ye:
His blessed and His gracious face,
Seek ye continually.*

Here, again, we see that fully one-half of the psalm is made up by the words of Rous, and not the words of inspiration. Many other examples might be given to the same effect.

Sometimes we find much of the metrical version composed of mere repetitions of the inspired sentiment, the "human composition" constituting most of the psalm.

An instance of this is found in the eighty-fourth Psalm.

PROSE TRANSLATION.

How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts.

ROUS' VERSION.

How lovely is Thy dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts, to me;
*The tabernacles of Thy grace,
How pleasant, Lord, they be.*

Many scores of these human explanations are Rous' additional thoughts, employed to fill up the stanza and make metre. Thus

PROSE TRANSLATION.

Be thankful unto Him and bless His name.

ROUS' VERSION.

Praise, laud and bless His name
always;
For it is seemly so to do.

PROSE TRANSLATION.

I thought on my ways.
I delayed not.

ROUS' VERSION.

I thought upon my *former* ways,
And did my life well try.
I did not stay, *nor linger long,*
As those that slothful are.

It is a surprising fact that those who are so afraid of the work and words of man, have incorporated in their psalmody enough of this sort of human composition to make seven psalms of the

size of Psalm First, or twenty-four of the size of the one hundred and seventeenth.

In addition to these larger interpolations, the Rev. Wm. Annan, to whom we are mainly indebted for these examples, has marked more than three hundred smaller additions to the sacred text.

Rous has also, on the principle adopted by his advocates, frequently made an unwarranted use of the great and holy Name. The following is an instance :

The spearmen's host, the multitude
Of bulls, *which fiercely look ;*
Those calves which people have *forth sent,*
O Lord our God, rebuke,
Till every one submit himself
And silver pieces bring.
The people that delight in war
Disperse, *O God and King.*

Is that a "literal version" which so often introduces the names ascribed to the Deity where there is nothing to answer to these words in the original?

Again, "many scores of adjectives, and similar qualifying terms, are thrown in, and put where the Holy Spirit never put them; . . . these are examples of mere poetical license—mere patch-work—human inventions to save the credit of the stanza, lest it should appear 'like the legs of the lame.'"

The admirers of Rous' version contend for the exact words of Scripture. They attach much blame to Dr. Watts for, in some instances, chang-

ing "God's order of thought, which is, doubtless, the best for His Church." But how is it in their received version? A few specimens must suffice:

PROSE TRANSLATION.

Hide Thy face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.

In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what man can do unto me.

ROUS' VERSION.

All my iniquities blot out,
Thy face hide from my sins.

I will not fear what flesh can do,
My trust is in the Lord.

If Dr. Watts is reprehensible, how will his accusers stand acquitted in the face of the forty or fifty inversions of "God's order of thought" which they endorse?

Our friends have also omitted certain portions of the inspired Psalms. The twentieth verse of the seventy-second Psalm has no place in Rous' version. It reads thus: "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." They have also left out most of the titles of the Psalms which are often found so valuable in interpreting the meaning of the writers. Dr. Alexander and T. Hartwell Horne, together with other learned commentators, concur in the opinion that all the titles which are extant are of undoubted canonical authority. Of these there are one hundred and twenty-five, only ten of which are in Rous' version. It appears, therefore, that one hundred and fifteen inspired titles containing matter enough to make fifteen psalms of the size of Psalm First, have been rejected by those who stickle for the Psalms entire as the only Psalm-Book. They have acknowledged the validity of

these titles by versifying and singing ten of them which, as it regards evidence of inspiration, occupy precisely the same position as the remaining one hundred and fifteen. Might we not as well reject the titles to the Apostolic Epistles? Who would have thought that those who have left out of their version a considerable portion of the Book of Psalms are the very persons who charge the hymn-singing public with "laying aside the Psalms as useless?"

This brief examination makes it perfectly manifest that Rous' version is not a literal translation of the Psalms. On the authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, we pronounce it to be only a *paraphrase*. In their acts, from the year 1644, to the year 1650, "they uniformly call Rous, not a version (or translation), but only a 'paraphrase.' In these official decrees we find such phraseology as, 'paraphrase of the Psalms,' 'new paraphrase,' 'our own paraphrase, etc., and, finally, approving and ordaining said paraphrase.'" Why not, then, sing the paraphrases of Wesley and Watts, which are often as literal as those of Rous?

In conclusion upon this point, we may be allowed to decline accepting the principle urged for our adoption by our Seceder brethren, inasmuch as they themselves repudiate it! They argue that the Psalms entire, and the Psalms only, must be sung in Divine worship, and yet they add to the

Psalms enough of "human composition" to make fourteen psalms equal to Psalm First; and they reject enough of the inspired text of the Psalms to make fifteen psalms equal to Psalm First. It has been truthfully said that Rous' version bears the same relation to a correct translation of the Book of Psalms that a piece of silk with five hundred patches of cotton cloth bears to a whole piece of silk. The investigation of this much controverted subject only confirms us in the belief that the Churches are at liberty to adopt as their psalmody such "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" as are consonant with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

CHAPTER II.

UNINSPIRED SACRED LYRICS.

Watts and Wesley — Opinion of John Wesley — Dr. Abel Stevens' estimate of Charles Wesley — Hymns on Holiness — Life-long Devotion of the Wesleys to Sacred Song — Reservoirs of Sacred Poetry—Merits of the Hymn-book of M. E. Church, South—Singing Hymns of Praise — Other collections of Hymns and Songs — Hymns and Songs too little Read and Studied — Brief Sketches of Hymn Writers — Great Volume of Sacred Song not yet Complete.

We have reason to be thankful that in almost every age of the Christian Church, God has raised up men eminently qualified to write songs for the Sanctuary. Many of these sacred lyrics, as we have seen, expressed the spiritual life of the Church in the early morning of her history; others are cherished as the last earthly hallelujahs of the martyrs; and others still there are which will long be recognized as the battle shouts of the Reformation. But of all the uninspired composers of holy song, Watts and Wesley, by general consent, stand pre-eminent. Watts has left us many versions and imitations of Psalms and parts of Psalms, besides many very excellent and popular hymns. Many of these are remarkable for elegance and force of diction; for beauty and

grandeur of conception, and for the pious spirit by which they are pervaded.

Charles Wesley's life was a continuous out-burst of sacred song. A recent discovery has added much to his well-merited fame as a Christian poet: we allude to a free and admirable version of about one hundred and twenty of the Psalms in manuscript. This valuable production was evidently, at one time, the property of Lady Huntingdon, but was afterward buried in the archives of a college, from whence it was disinterred and sold a few years ago. It providentially fell into the hands of Mr. Henry Fish, and now constitutes the principal part of the *Wesleyan Psalter*, a most delightful volume, recently issued from the Methodist Publishing House in Nashville. In the Introductory Essay by Mr. Fish, it is said that "though Charles Wesley has not always confined himself to the letter of the Psalms which he versified, yet in every case, he has embodied the spirit, and in many of them, he has kept close to the sense of the original." Mr. Fish says again: "He (Charles Wesley) has sung in his own style—a style characterized by smoothness, and harmony, and pathos, and power, and beauty, and occasionally by sublimity and grandeur. There is nothing in the form of poetry, within the compass of uninspired language, to surpass in composition many of the Psalms in this volume."

The "bard of Methodism" was a wonderfully

voluminous writer. About four thousand six hundred of his hymns have been printed, and about two thousand still remain in manuscript. An irrepressible fervor of soul—a deep, vivid, and abiding religious experience—is the distinguishing characteristic of his immortal lyrics, which embody the great revival spirit which burned so intensely in the hearts of the Wesleyan Reformers.

This crowning excellency in hymn-composition has, doubtless, tended to detract from the renown of Charles Wesley. The world's heart is naturally cold; the world's mind is captivated by every other species of beauty sooner than by the beauties of holiness. The common intellect and the common heart are ever ready to stand off at a distance and admire the attributes of the Deity, or the love displayed in the Atonement; but when they are urged to draw nigh to God—when they are entreated to let “the King of Glory come in,” they shrink from the contact, and seek more congenial associations. Even those who bear the name of Christ but too frequently lag so far behind in their heavenward journey, as almost to lose sight of the Savior. Hence, that which is of a general or abstract character, is more likely to elicit applause from the multitude than that which makes a direct appeal to each individual, bringing light and fire into the mind and heart. In the long roll of eminent hymn-writers, many honored names are to be found

identified with the joyful verities of Christian experience; but peerless amongst these stands the name of Charles Wesley—a name that will grow dearer to the heart of the Church as ages roll away. Just as the great community of believers advance in true holiness, in the same ratio will the fame of the “sweet singer” of modern times be enhanced.

James Montgomery, himself a world-renowned poet, thus speaks of Charles Wesley: “Christian experience, from the deeps of affliction, through all the gradations of doubt, fear, desire, faith, hope, expectation, to the transports of perfect love, in the very beams of the beatific vision; Christian experience furnishes him with everlasting and inexhaustible themes; and it must be confessed that he has celebrated them with an affluence of diction, and a splendor of coloring, rarely surpassed. At the same time he has invested them with a power of truth, and endeared them both to the imagination and the affections, with a pathos which makes feeling conviction, and leaves the understanding little to do but to acquiesce in the decisions of the heart.”

Charles Wesley's Arminianism has also been truthfully regarded as another draw back upon his reputation as a sacred poet; but this objection will ultimately pass away. The violent controversy on the “five points,” which so long agitated the Churches, has, in a measure, subsided.

It will, of course, break out occasionally in different localities, but a pacific spirit will, we think, hereafter pervade the Church, as a whole. In fact, present indications are hopefully prophetic. It has already been discovered that the poet of Methodism wrote, not as an ecclesiastical partisan, but as an earnest Christian. The great foundation doctrines of salvation which are breathed forth in his hymns, are preached from Sabbath to Sabbath in all the orthodox pulpits in the land; and his soul-stirring lyrics have been found to accord so well with the Scriptures, that they are now used in other than Methodist Churches, much more extensively than ever before. Again, we predict for Charles Wesley a still more radiant future than was promised him in the early dawn of his fame. As that ardent, loving spirit which absorbed his soul, advances to the mastery of cold and inveterate prejudice, so will the proper appreciation of the substantial merit of his hymns be promoted.

Much has been said as to the relative claims of Wesley and Watts. The present writer freely admits that he comes to the investigation with predilections in favor of Wesley. Perhaps the Christian world is not yet ready to unhesitatingly award the palm of superiority to either of them; nor is it a matter of very special importance. Still, the too prevalent disposition to slight the claims of Wesley, evinced in many of the works on

Hymnology which have appeared since his death, makes us desirous to place him and his writings in their true light. We give the following from the pen of the Rev. Richard Watson, one of the ablest of writers. It is proper, however, to remark that the version of Psalms to which we have alluded had not come to light when Mr. Watson wrote. That production would certainly have intensified his appreciation of the poetical abilities of Charles Wesley. Mr. Watson says: "Watts excels Mr. Charles Wesley only in the sweeter flow of his numbers, and in the feeling and sympathy of those hymns which are designed to administer comfort to the afflicted. In composition, he was in all respects, decidedly his (Wesley's) inferior, in good taste, classic elegance, uniformity, correct rhyming, and vigor. As to the theology of their respective hymns, leaving particular doctrines out of the question, the great truths of religious experience are also far more clearly and forcibly embodied by Mr. Charles Wesley than by Dr. Watts."

Mr. Watson also heartily endorsed the opinion of John Wesley in regard to the hymns of Charles Wesley then in use. John Wesley says: "In these hymns there is no doggerel, no botches, nothing put in to patch up the rhyme, no feeble expletives. Here is nothing turgid or bombastic on the one hand, or low and creeping on the other. Here are no cant expressions, no words without

meaning. Here are (allow me to say) both the purity, the strength, and the elegance of the English language; and, at the same time, the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity."

One of the latest historians of Methodism,* an accomplished writer and critic, remarks as follows: "The whole soul of Charles Wesley was imbued with poetic genius. His thoughts seemed to bask and revel in rhythm. The varieties of his metres (said to be unequaled by any English writer whatever,) shows how impulsive were his poetic emotions, and how wonderful his facility in their spontaneous utterance. In the Wesleyan Hymn Book alone, they amount to at least twenty-six, and others are found in his other productions. They march, at times, like lengthened processions with solemn grandeur; they sweep at other times like chariots of fire through the heavens; they are broken like the sobs of grief at the grave-side; play like the joyful affections of childhood at the hearth, or shout like victors in the fray of the battle-field. No man ever surpassed Charles Wesley in the harmonies of language. To him it was a diapason." Mr. Stevens adds: "More than a quarter of a century since, the Methodist hymns were sold at the rate of sixty thousand volumes annually in England; they have been issued at an immensely larger rate in America. Their triumphant melodies swell farther and far-

*Abel Stevens, LL.D.

ther over the world every year, and their influence, moral and intellectual, is beyond all calculation."

In this connection, we ought not to ignore the fact that, as it regards hymns on holiness, Charles Wesley confessedly stands "alone in his glory."

In the Hymn Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, there are a number of excellent hymns on this subject. Of these, a few are translations from the German and French, by John Wesley, the residue are from the pen of Charles Wesley, an enduring monument, no less of his genius than of his piety. In these soul-thrilling lyrics, his heart evidently guided his pen.

As corroborative of a previous remark, we may state, that some of these hymns on holiness are freely used in Divine worship outside of the pale of Methodism. We make especial mention of the one commencing—

" O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free!
A heart that always feels Thy blood,
So freely spilt for me! "

It has at last been ascertained that the Wesleys were not enthusiasts; that they did not teach the doctrine of absolute, angelic, or Adamic perfection; but that they advocated in admirable prose, and in inimitable poetry, the great Christian truth that we are required to love God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. The world has as yet found no page in Charles Wesley's poetry which is extravagant or unscriptural.

The devotion of the Wesleys to sacred song was ardent and life-long. They published their first Collection of Hymns in 1738, and their last Collection in 1788; and during the intervening half century, they issued upward of forty lyrical publications suited to private, social, and public worship—to adults and to children—and to every grade of religious experience from the first strivings of the Spirit, to the close of the believers final conflict with sin and death, and his victorious entrance upon the incorruptible inheritance. To the delightful and invigorating exercise of praise, they devoted the freshness of youth, the strength of manhood, and the waning energies of old age. And now, having reached the Eternal City of Song, they lift up their voices sweetly, loudly, and perpetually in praise to the Giver of “every good and perfect gift.”

The reservoirs of sacred poetry are numerous and inexhaustible. There are extant about seventy metrical versions of the entire Book of Psalms; and of partial versions, ranging from one to more than one hundred Psalms, there are, in the English language alone, about one hundred and forty. Besides the Psalms, a large portion of the Holy Scriptures was written in poetic style, and furnishes fit themes for praise. We must also remember that, of uninspired sacred poets, the two great composers of whom we have made special mention are only the chiefs; the hymn-books of the Churches

have been enriched with many very valuable contributions from other writers. Nor is the Church of God dependent for her songs of praise solely upon the living and the dead. Should her sublunary history be prolonged, worthy successors of those sacred poets who have already written their names upon the roll of immortality will be raised up to celebrate the great doctrines and facts, and especially the later, and more triumphant achievements of Christianity.

We are now prepared to consider more particularly the merits of the Hymn-Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The following historical facts* may not be uninteresting: John Wesley was justly considered by the fathers of Methodism, a master of method, as well as an excellent judge of what was desirable and necessary for the edification of the Church. When, therefore, they wanted a hymn-book for the American Church, they prepared one upon the model of Mr. Wesley's large hymn-book, first published in the year 1779. The one thus prepared being too small, a second part was added, drawn up substantially upon the same model as the former. This double book was found inconvenient, and was, moreover, still essentially defective. The old book, that is, the one which preceded the Hymn-Book now in use by the M. E. Church, South,

* Taken chiefly from an article in the Quar. Review of the M. E. Church, South.

was then prepared; and, as if the compilers were afraid of innovation, the same general plan was adopted; and the defectiveness of this book being felt, in the year 1836, a supplement was added. Most of the hymns in this supplement were taken from the supplement of the British book; but, unfortunately, the plan of that supplement, and scores of its most desirable hymns, were not adopted. Mr. Wesley's hymn-book was never designed by him to subserve all the purposes of a Church hymn-book; but merely to be used by the *Society* after they had used the psalms, hymns, and canticles of the Established Church. For those of his chapels in Europe and America, where the "Sunday Service" was used, other collections of psalms and hymns were provided. Had this been borne in mind by our fathers, they would either have compiled a supplement containing the necessary additions, as was done by the British brethren, when they assumed, in a manner, their independence of the Establishment; or a work like the present Hymn-Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, prepared *ab initio*, to answer all the purposes of public, social, and domestic worship.

In the year 1847, in the M. E. Church, South, the old book spoken of was superseded by the new one. The first General Conference of this Church, held in the city of Petersburg, Virginia, in the year 1846, appointed a committee

consisting of the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, D. D., the Rev. W. M. Wightman, D. D., the Rev. Whiteford Smith, D. D., and the Rev. A. B. Longstreet, D. D., to compile a hymn-book *de novo*. A year's patient labor, the first named being chief in the work, resulted in the production of a book which has proved to be entirely satisfactory to the Church, and is the more highly prized the more it is used. The value of the work is set forth in the preface by the Bishops. It is not likely that such men would "most cordially commend" an inferior hymn-book to the Southern Methodist communion, and to the religious public. The following are some of the excellences of the book :

1. Its Title.

It is denominated "A Collection of Hymns for Public, Social, and Domestic Worship." To designate a book, the materials of which have been culled from all available sources, by the terms "Methodist Hymns," "Baptist Hymns," or "Lutheran Hymns," is by some considered improper. Even admitting that the hymns are chiefly the effusions of Methodistic authors, it is hardly judicious to give them that denominational appellation. There is but one step from the denominational to the sectarian—in fact they often blend with each other; hence the special designation is apt to prejudice the Christian public against the book. The simple word "Hymns" is, we think, much better. The M. E. Church, South,

has no disposition to monopolize the book under consideration, only in so far as the copy-right secures its ownership. It might be used advantageously, as we conceive, by any one of the branches of the Church of Christ. We hereby take occasion to recommend its perusal to all Christians, of whatever denomination.

2. The excellence of the "Hymns" published by the M. E. Church, South, is seen in the systematic arrangement of the contents of the book, and in its abundant variety. The benefit of a simple and philosophical disposal of the various parts of the work was experienced and highly appreciated before it had been in use six months. Let the reader glance at the table of contents, and he will see that every necessary subject is embraced, and that each has its proper place in the volume. Part I., adapted to Public Worship, comprises the Being and Perfections of God—Mediation of Christ—Offices of the Holy Ghost—Institutions of Christianity—The Gospel Call—Penitential Exercises—Christian Experience—Death and the Future State—and Special Occasions. Part II.—Social Worship—embraces—Communion of Saints and Prayer. Part III.—Domestic Worship—includes—The Family and the Closet. The book closes with Benedictions and Doxologies. The volume constitutes a complete thesaurus of the choicest sacred lyrics. We can conceive of no want in the department of

praise, felt either by congregations, families, or individuals, which may not be supplied from the one thousand and sixty-three hymns and doxologies of which the work is composed. While it covers the entire field of theology and Christian experience, it embraces no less than thirty-seven varieties of metre.

3. We notice the literary and poetical excellence of the hymns. On this point but little need be added to the simple statement that the book is indebted to the sanctified genius of upwards of one hundred pious lyrists. The following are the names of some of the authors, with the number of hymns composed by each: C. Wesley 542, Watts 151, Doddridge 62, J. Wesley 37, Montgomery 21, Newton 16, Cowper 11, Beddome 11, Gibbons 9, Heber 7, A. Steele 8, S. Wesley, Jr., 7, Hart 6, Brady and Tate 6, Addison 5, Grant 5, and 142 by eighty-five other authors.

It must be borne in mind, too, that only the choice productions of these illustrious votaries of song have been admitted. We may safely say that, in procuring materials for this justly popular Hymn-Book, the whole world of sacred poetry, then extant, was laid under contribution.

4. The crowning excellency of the book is its Orthodoxy and its Spirituality. The tenets which it inculcates have been rigidly scrutinized, and no heterodoxy has been discovered. The few stanzas which have been considered by some as of doubt-

ful signification, are satisfactorily explained when subjected to the ordinary rules of interpretation. The Bishops in their preface remark: "This Hymn-Book is truly Wesleyan, or rather *Scriptural* in its sentiments, also in the prominence given to those subjects which are of the greatest importance in the Christian life."

Many of these hymns are also marked by a spiritual buoyancy—a holy joyfulness—that admirably fits them for purposes of worship. Some of them, it is true, are penitential and precatory, and it is well for us sometimes to sing our prayers. We worship God by making, in faith, an humble, direct appeal to Him as the Author of our being and the Father of our mercies.

Some of the pieces in the book are of a didactic cast; but they are very far from being prosy homilies. They first speak forcibly of the greatness and goodness of God, and then call upon us, as with a trumpet's voice, to rise up and render to Him the thanks and the adoration which are justly His due.

But a large proportion of the hymns under review are properly hymns of praise, precisely such as ought to constitute at least three-fourths of our songs in the house of the Lord. We have preaching in the sermon, and prayer before and after it; therefore, if our hymns are mostly praying and preaching hymns, a tiresome monotony in the service is apt to be the result. Let an agreeable

variety, and at the same time a graceful and effective homogeneity, be imparted to the worship by incorporating into it prayer, preaching, and praise, in due proportions.

The Hymn-Book of which we speak is good; let it be judiciously used. On every occasion of public and social worship, as a rule, would it not be well for the minister to select at least two hymns of praise? The Rev. Henry Allon says, perhaps too emphatically: "Church-song is restricted to the lyrical form of poetry, for this alone can express the consentaneous emotion and worship of a congregation. It does not, therefore, tolerate didactic poetry—hymns which are merely disguised sermons, which expound doctrines, or analyze feelings. It (Church-song) is the expression of feeling, not the description of it. A congregation can not sing a creed or a homily. It may not preach to God; it can not preach to itself."

For the purposes of worship, the preference is certainly to be given to such hymns as

"All hail the power of Jesus' name—"

"Come let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne."

What we especially need in our Church-song, is the eagle's wings upon which the pious soul may soar Sun-ward. These we have in the book under review—pure, seraphic, sublime

thoughts. We might also enumerate among the minor excellencies of the Hymn-Book, the copious index; the titles prefixed to all the hymns, and the authors' names which, having been ascertained with great care, accompany their hymns respectively, only a few pieces in the book being anonymous.

We need scarcely add that this collection of Hymns is, in our opinion, fully equal to any with which we are acquainted. It is, therefore, confidently offered as a complete answer to the question—"What should we sing?"

We have no disposition to ignore the hymn-books used by other Churches than the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, but have selected for special notice the one with which we are most familiar.

If anything more is desired in the line of Sacred Lyrics, we would heartily recommend a neat volume which was compiled by the Chairman of the Committee which prepared the Hymn-Book. It is entitled "Songs of Zion: A Supplement to the Hymn-Book." It contains five hundred and three excellent songs, a few of which claim the Editor as their author. Many of these spiritual songs are among the most admired specimens of sacred poetry; and the Miscellany, in the latter part of the book, contains many of the most popular and stirring pieces known to the Church. The "Songs of Zion" certainly deserve to take

the place of all the objectionable song-books which are published and sold merely for the purpose of gain.

As it regards Hymns for children, the Hymn Book, the "Songs of Zion," and the "Hymns for Schools and Families," afford many excellent pieces suited to the nursery or the Sunday School. Whatever is lacking in this department will, doubtless, be fully supplied by the Sunday School Hymn and Tune Book, issued from Nashville.

We cannot look upon these various, and most excellent collections of Hymns and Songs without expressing regret that they should be so little studied by those for whose especial benefit they have been published. How many thousands of the intelligent members of the Church have never yet given their Hymn-Book a careful reading! How many of the ministers have contented themselves with using the more familiar pieces, without exploring the invaluable treasures contained in the book, which they use, perhaps, daily! It is a very interesting, and a very profitable exercise to peruse the volume carefully, criticising every stanza, and marking every hymn, as didactic, precatory, or as a hymn of praise. In this way, many most beautiful couplets and stanzas will, for the first time, attract the reader's attention, and many admirable hymns hitherto unused by him will be discovered. This exercise will prove to be most beneficial in a spiritual point of view, and

cannot fail to produce a vastly higher appreciation of the book than was previously felt.

Among other excellencies of the Hymn-Book under review, we have mentioned the fact that the authors' names, respectively, are prefixed to nearly all the hymns. Many of these hymns, apart from those composed by Watts and Wesley, are favorite pieces which have been used by thousands of those who now sing with the angels and the redeemed in heaven.

A brief account of the writers of some of them may not be unacceptable.* We begin with the Rev. John Newton, who wrote—

“How tedious and tasteless the hours—”

“Approach my soul the mercy seat—”

“Amazing grace! how sweet the sound—”

“In evil long I took delight—”

“Though troubles assail and dangers affright—”

and eleven others in the Collection.

Mr. Newton was the son of respectable parents, and received the rudiments of a classical education. His father was a mariner, and the son also went to sea. After a series of strange adventures by sea and land, he was finally “impressed” and carried on board of an English vessel of war, which was about to sail for the East Indies. He was promoted to the rank of midshipman, but his conduct was extremely irregular. At length in a fit of folly he deserted from the service; but, being

*Condensed from “Methodist Hymnology,” by D. Creamer, Esq.

retaken, he was brought in chains to the vessel, was publicly flogged, and expelled from the quarter-deck. He finally entered into the service of an English slave-dealer on the west coast of Africa. This was in the year 1746. Here his degradation and sufferings were extreme. He tells us that while he was sick with a burning fever, he often found it difficult to procure a draught of water; and that when his appetite returned, his hunger was often appeased by the food which was secretly brought to him by the slaves who were in chains, from their own scanty supplies. He also suffered greatly for want of clothes, and was sometimes exposed to incessant rains, accompanied with strong winds, for thirty or forty hours together, without any shelter whatever. He sometimes stood on the rocks and washed his clothes, and then let them dry on his person while he slept. And, worse than all, his heart, according to his own confession, was darker than his outward condition.

This is the same John Newton, who afterward became the eminent minister and author, so well known for his numerous "Letters" on religious subjects, and the "Olney Hymns," which he wrote in connection with Cowper, Newton being the author of all of them with the exception of about sixty. He was a poet of very humble order, but his hymns are highly prized as the sincere effusions of a loving heart.

The Rev. John Cennick is designated as the author of

“Jesus my all, to heaven is gone,”

“Children of the heavenly King.”

In the year 1739, Mr. Cennick became acquainted with Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, and was appointed by the former his first teacher in Kingswood School. This appointment was probably made on the recommendation of Mr. Whitefield, whose example in preaching Calvinistic doctrines was followed by Mr. Cennick. He left Kingswood, after which he joined Mr. Whitefield, and became very popular for a time. Subsequently he joined the Moravians, in connection with whom he remained until his death, in the year 1775. He is spoken of as possessing a sweet simplicity of spirit, with ardent zeal in the cause of Christ, and is considered the founder of the Moravian Churches in Dublin and the north of Ireland. His hymns are upward of eight hundred in number, and fill two thick volumes; but the most of them are mere doggerel. The two which we have mentioned, however, are among the most popular and useful of our hymns.

Mr. Cennick also wrote several volumes of “Village Discourses,” which still circulate among the Calvinistic Dissenters in England.

“Come, Thou fount of every blessing,”

has been ascribed to the Rev. Robert Robinson,

but its authorship is now attributed to Lady Huntington, the pious, gifted, and distinguished patroness of the Calvinistic Methodists in Great Britain, in the time of the Wesleys and Whitefield.

That old favorite hymn,

“On Jordan’s stormy banks—”

and three others in the Collection, are said to have been written by the Rev. Samuel Stennett, D. D. He was a native of Exeter, England, and was ordained to the pastoral office in the Baptist Church in the year 1758, he being then thirty-one years of age. After exercising himself in the office of the ministry with great acceptability and usefulness for thirty-seven years, Dr. Stennett died in 1795, in his sixty-eighth year. In the year 1824, his works, with an account of his life and writings, were published in three octavo volumes. His hymns, only thirty-four in number, after those of Watts and Wesley, are among the best in the English language.

We are indebted to the Rev. Joseph Hart for the following:

“Come ye sinners, poor and needy—”

“Once more we come before our God—”

“O, for a glance of Heavenly day—”

“That doleful night before His death—”

“Prayer is appointed to convey—”

“This, this is the God we adore.”

Mr. Hart, late a minister of the Gospel in Lon-

don, published in the year 1759, a volume of "Hymns on Various Subjects, with The Author's Experience." In his Preface, it is said—"The following Hymns were composed partly from several passages of Scripture laid on my heart, or opened to my understanding, from time to time, by the Spirit of God, or else hinted to me by other Christians (of which latter there are indeed very few): partly from impressions felt under different frames of spirit at the times when they were respectively written. I desire wholly to submit them, with myself, to the all-wise disposal of that God, the sweet, enlivening influences of whose blessed Spirit I often felt while they were composing."

Although Mr. Hart must be numbered among the least of the poets, yet some of his Hymns have become an imperishable inheritance to the people of God. In doctrine he was Calvinistic.

Bishop Reginald Heber wrote—

"From Greenland's icy mountains,"

"Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,"

and six others of the "Hymns."

He was born in Yorkshire, England, in the year 1783. While a student, he greatly distinguished himself by obtaining several prizes; soon after which he was elected to a fellowship in All Souls' College, when he visited Germany, Russia, and the Crimea. For several years

after his return, he devoted himself zealously to his duties as a parochial priest. On the death of Bishop Middleton, he accepted the See of Calcutta, and subsequently made visitations through various districts of his very extensive diocese. Having arrived at Tirutchinopoli, in the discharge of his Episcopal duties, April 1, 1826, the next day, while bathing, he was seized with an apoplectic fit, of which he died. Bishop Heber is said to have been an excellent man, and a zealous advocate of the cause of Christ.

In the year 1827, a small volume of hymns written by him was published, in relation to which, it is said, "they breathe a devout spirit, recognize the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, and, as poetical compositions, some of them possess considerable beauty." The Bishop's best composition in hymnic verse, and the one which has given him the greatest reputation, is his well known "Missionary Hymn," of which we have made mention.

We must close these brief sketches with a few remarks in regard to Bishop Kenn, the author of that excellent and oft-sung doxology—"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Thomas Kenn, some time Bishop of Bath and Wells, was born in the year 1637, and died in the year 1710. He had the double honor of being one of the seven prelates sent to the Tower for protesting against the tyrannical usurpations of spiritual authority by James II., and also of con-

scientifically vacating his See rather than take the oaths to William III., after having sworn allegiance to his predecessor. His poems are numerous and of considerable merit, though he is now generally known only by three—the *Morning*, *Evening*, and *Midnight Hymns*, to each of which is affixed the great Doxology to which we have alluded. These were originally published in the year 1697.

In reference to these hymns, Mr. Montgomery remarks: “Had he endowed three hospitals, he might have been less a benefactor to posterity. There is exemplary plainness of speech, manly vigor of thought, and consecration of heart, in these pieces.”

The following are the first lines of each of them:

“Awake, my soul, and with the sun”—

“All praise to Thee, my God, this night”—

“My God, I now from sleep awake.”

We close these biographical sketches with devout thanksgivings to our Heavenly Father for the Bible—the grand text-book of sacred poetry, and also for so many pious and gifted writers of “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.”

But the world’s great volume of holy song is not yet complete. “Who may presume to write ‘Finis’ upon any human form of prayer, or collection of songs? When Ambrose has brought his contributions to worship-song, is Gregory to be

forbidden? When Gregory has completed his Hymnasium, is Luther to be interdicted? When Luther has filled the Churches of the Reformation with sacred song, is Gerhardt to be declared contraband? When Sternhold and Hopkins have presented their version of the Psalms, is Watts to be delivered over to 'uncovenanted mercies?' When Watts has completed his wonderful canon of psalms and hymns, are the contributions of Wesley and Cowper, Montgomery and Keble to be put into the Apocrypha? Who will presume to discriminate the inspiration? Blessed be the Great Head of the Church, its hymnology has hitherto been a perennial inspiration of its spiritual life. The great gift of sacred song has been restricted to no age or nation: some great voice has ever been heard attesting its endowment with 'the gift and faculty divine.' And it were as foolish as it would be presumptuous to refuse its later products. The ever varying and ever developing spiritual life of each generation will necessarily adapt and create its own hymnology; and the presumption is, the inspiration of the later Christian ages will be more precious than that of the earlier. The ever enriching thought—the ever enlarging experience—the ever deepening sanctity of the Church, will produce a richer, nobler song." *

*Allon.

SECTION IV.—WHY SHOULD WE SING?

CHAPTER I.

WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE IS IN HIMSELF AND FOR WHAT HE IS TO US.

What constitutes the Glory of God?—The work of Creation proves God to be Omnipotent—His power as great in the Moral as in the Natural World—The Wisdom of God commensurate with His Power—God is Love—The Mercy of God the most attractive form of His Goodness—We are overwhelmed with emotion when we consider what God is to us.

The question—Why should we sing?—is one of fundamental importance, and hence, although it has been, in effect, answered in the preceding chapters, yet it deserves a more explicit notice; and, for its further consideration, may the Holy Spirit suitably impress our hearts.

We should praise God for what He is in Himself. When we undertake to contemplate the Divine character, we find ourselves overwhelmed with the grandeur of the theme, and all we can hope to do is to grasp and realize as far as we may those simple and yet sublime revelations of the nature of the Deity which have been graciously made to us.

Infinite Power, infinite Wisdom, and infinite Goodness, constitute the glory of God.

First, we have the attribute of Power. The God in whom we trust must be "mighty and able to save." If we are to look to Him for the pardon of sin; for spiritual regeneration; for daily bread, both for the soul and the body; for protection from danger; for support and comfort amid our trials and sorrows; for victory over the last enemy; for deliverance from the dominion of the grave, and for "life and immortality;"—then we must be assured that the Arm upon which we lean is Omnipotent and Eternal. With this conviction we turn to the Scriptures, and the first sentence on the first page satisfies our anxious minds. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." If He created all things, He must have existed before all things. He is, therefore, self-existent, and independent of all created things. Then, we will not fear "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

The fact that the work of creation is ascribed to God, is conclusive evidence of His Omnipotence. By the ability which He gives us, we can change the form or the color of matter, but no man—no angel—can create the smallest mote which floats in the evening sunlight, or the impalpable particles of dust which rise up from beneath our feet. All the boasted divinities of the heathen

are utterly mute, sightless, and inanimate, but "our God made the heavens." He created the earth and all the other planets, and commissioned them for their interminable journey around the magnificent centre of the system. He sprinkled the heavens with suns—peopled immensity with countless millions of ponderous and radiant worlds, and forever upholds them by the word of His power. And this is but His handiwork—the work of His fingers.

In the moral world His power is equally great. He has already triumphed gloriously over death and hell, and has borne millions of the ransomed to the heaven of heavens.

The power of God remains unimpaired by the lapse of ages. From eternity to eternity, He continues ever the same, "without variableness or shadow of turning."

Amid the revolutions and decay which mark the annals of time, He still sits supreme on His throne—the "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and is, for aught we know to the contrary, continually calling into being new worlds, that they may everlastingly roll and shine to His praise.

The final conflagration, while it will overwhelm the ungodly with dismay, will only serve to thrill the believer's heart with higher joy than he experienced during the succession of Summer and Winter, seed-time and harvest, and day and night. He looks out upon the sea of flame as it rolls its

towering billows from pole to pole, and regards the grand catastrophe as a stupendous display of the Divine Omnipotence—the prompt and consoling fulfilment of prophecy. As he gazes upon the scene, he exclaims: “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.”

“Hope, undismayed, shall o’er the ruins smile,
And light her torch at nature’s funeral pile.”

We are further taught in the Scriptures that the Wisdom of God is commensurate with His Power. The doctrine of Omniscience is also closely allied to that of Omnipresence. When we reflect upon our own ignorance, and when we consider that there are mysteries which angels cannot solve, then it is that the idea of infinite wisdom becomes truly grand. Of course our conceptions of that which is infinite must be imperfect, and yet it is our privilege and our duty to contemplate this attribute of the Deity with awe and delight. The wisdom of God surveys the eternity that is past; at the present time, it surrounds and penetrates all matter, searches all hearts, fills immensity; and with unerring certainty, travels over the limitless future. There is no song in heaven

which the all-wise God does not hear; no transaction on earth which He does not witness; no pang endured by the lost in hell of which He is not cognizant. Well may the Psalmist exclaim: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" God is with the multitude in the city; with the cottager on the mountain-side; with the pilgrim as he pursues his lonely march through the desert; with the mariner in mid-ocean, and with the exile on his desolate island.

In death, our spirits return to that God who gave them, and the mortal part is watched and guarded until the time comes for its everlasting reunion with the soul. Our Omniscient Creator and righteous Lord will ultimately "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

How surpassingly excellent and wonderful is the wisdom of God!

But the combination of wisdom and power is only calculated to excite alarm, unless evidence be given that these attributes will operate for us, and not against us. No enemy is so much to be dreaded as the one who confronts us with far-seeing sagacity and unlimited ability. Contemplating the Divine character, therefore, we anxiously ask—is God kindly disposed toward us? or is He our implacable and invincible foe? We turn to the Record, and there we read that—God is

LOVE. The goodness of God is prominently set forth on almost every page of the Scriptures. The Psalmist, addressing the Deity, says, beautifully, forcibly, and comprehensively—"Thou art good, and Thou doest good." God is good in *principle*, and good in *action*. As it regards His nature, He is emphatically THE GRACIOUS ONE. As it regards His dealings with His creatures, He is THE ALL-BOUNTIFUL POURER FORTH OF ALL GOOD. He is the grand source whence all goodness flows, whether it be found on earth or in heaven. Good angels or good men are so only because they have been brought into association with the God of goodness.

Jehovah, it is true, is just; but He is not tyrannical. Before His wrath smites, His love wooes. He inflicts vengeance, but only upon those who have rebelliously trampled upon His goodness. How shall we compute or measure the exuberant, unparalleled, unspeakable wealth of the Divine love? We survey as far as we can the innumerable rivers of beneficence which flow out from this grand, exhaustless Reservoir, and, overwhelmed with wonder and gratitude, we exclaim :

"Its streams the whole creation reach!"

The Mercy of God is certainly to us the most enchanting form of His goodness—the most gracious display of His love. The history of the angels—their holiness and happiness—is indeed

a shining record of the goodness of God. The story of man's stay in Eden has His unutterable love both for its warp and woof. But we are overwhelmed with pleasing astonishment when we call to mind the fall of man, and the fact that He has devised means whereby His banished ones are brought back to His loving embrace.

If it were possible for us to get beyond the domain of the King Eternal; if we could forget that He is the Author of our being and the Father of our mercies; if from our remote stand-point we could view the character and works of Jehovah as disinterested spectators, even then we should be filled with awe and wonder at the contemplation of a spectacle so august and glorious. We should be excited, attracted—sweetly and powerfully drawn toward this embodiment of unlimited power and goodness, directed by infinite wisdom. But if this would be the effect of a distant, and merely abstract view of the Deity, what must be the emotions of the soul when, under the influence of the Spirit, we sing—

“This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our Love;
He will send down His heavenly powers,
To carry us above!”

O, how expressive of condescending regard is that word **MERCY**! Literally—the pain of His heart. We read of His “tender mercies,” and of “the riches of His goodness.”

In Creation we see the Hand of God; in Redemption, we see His heart.

“Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brighter shone,
The justice or the grace.”

“Now the full glories of the Lamb
Adorn the heavenly plains:
Bright seraphs learn Immanuel’s name,
And try their choicest strains.”

In this matter of love, God must forever stand pre-eminent. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” The patriot may fall in defense of his loved ones, and the “green graves of his sires;” the mother, traveling over the snows of Russia, may cast herself to the ravenous beasts who are in pursuit, that while they are devouring her, the children, who are dearer to her than life itself, may escape; but “God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

“O, Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like Thine.”

Human nature “sunk in shame,” is to be dignified—glorified. So far as we can determine, no angel in heaven has so much cause to thank and praise God as have ransomed sinners. Christ was not ashamed to call us brethren—to take upon Himself our nature—and in the union of the human with the Divine nature, to ascend to Heaven and

take His seat at the right hand of the Father. In His triumphant resurrection and ascension, and admittance into glory everlasting, He is "our forerunner."

"Up to the Lord our flesh shall fly
At the great rising day."

It is thought by many that the faithful will not only be "equal to the angels," but *our* nature having been united to the Divine, and God having made for us an infinite sacrifice, we shall stand nearest the throne, and, as St. John seems to set forth, will be leaders in the song of Redemption.

He withholds "no good thing" from His obedient children. For them the sun shines—the rain falls—the flowers bloom—the earth brings forth its fruits. God has given them life, and health, and friends, and a safe abode. He has not only bought them with a price; but He has released them from the guilt and power of sin, and has adopted them into His own family. Not only does Christ reign in their hearts, but they are heirs apparent to thrones and crowns of enduring stability and glory.

Let the child of God review his past life; let him at the same time look into his own heart, and he will find abundant reason for praise. How often has God delivered him from temptation—soothed him in sickness—solaced him in seasons of bereavement—guided and sustained him in the midst of perplexity and disappointment, and given

him the victory over his spiritual foes. Whence that sense of security which he continually feels—that unutterable peace and joy—that hope full of immortality?

Let the believer, in imagination, bring near the final triumph of faith over sin and sorrow; death and the grave; the celestial gates

“On golden hinges turning,”

to admit the way-worn traveler to Zion, and the ineffable and endless joys consequent upon his “abundant entrance” into that city whose temple is the Lord God and the Lamb. Let him survey the awful depths of that hell which he has escaped and the delectable mountains, gilded with the golden light of an eternal day, on whose summits he may stand in glory and peace, and let him remember that this “great salvation” is through the unspeakable love of our Heavenly Father for His rebellious children—and will he be at a loss for an answer to the question—Why should we sing?

To all these inestimable blessings, present and prospective, the heart and tongue should respond in accents of adoring love. A holy rapture should possess the soul; thanksgivings burning with intensest fervor should constantly ascend to Him who has so graciously visited us.

When we essay to praise a God so glorious in Himself, and so unceasing and bountiful in His benefactions to us, His unworthy creatures, cold-

ness and dullness can be nothing less than an abomination in His sight. Our zeal should “no languor know.” Faith should bind us to the Cross ; Love should set the soul on fire, and angel-winged Hope should waft us onward to the transporting scenes of the radiant future.

CHAPTER II.

THE POWER OF SONG.

It banishes the evil Spirit from Saul — Tyrtæus — What Terpander did with the Spartans — Alexander — Amabeus, the Harper — The Abyssinian Trumpet — William the Conqueror — Effect of Music on Murad IV. — Music at the battle of Quebec in 1760 — Haydn moved to tears — The Theatre — The Starving Lion Charmed — The Singing of Cookman — Singing by Soldiers in Mexico — Effect of a Song on an Actress — Song at Camp-meeting — The Grey-headed Gambler — The Nobleman's Daughter — Reasons why we should Sing — "Sing Praises to God! Sing Praises!"

Being persuaded that the general estimate of the power of song is very far below the reality, we would, if possible, contribute something toward elevating the popular appreciation to the proper standard. With this view, we call attention to some of the effects which music has produced.

Let us turn to the following brief, but beautiful and wonderful narrative: "It came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

Here is a fact to be believed, whether we can solve the mystery or not. The music from David's

harp fell upon the ear of the unhappy monarch

“ With power the pulse of anguish to restrain,
And charm the evil spirit from the brain.”

When the prophet Elisha was called upon by King Jehoshaphat to prophesy in regard to the contemplated battle, his mind was so troubled by the improper conduct of the young men at Bethel, and their dreadful end, that he was disqualified for the work. Hence, he said: “ Now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.”

Pythagoras* thought that the practice of music would correct morals, and cure all the diseases of the soul.

Of the honor in which minstrels were held, many instances occur in Ossian. They were ambassadors between contending chiefs, and their profession was held sacred. They and the Druids, who were the philosophers and priests of those times, whose interests were consolidated, were exempted from taxes and military service; and so great was the veneration which the princes entertained for their party, and so highly were they delighted with their strains, that they sometimes pardoned even capital offenses for a song.

The celebrated Tyrtæus was not only a warrior, but also a poet and a musician. The Spartans paid him the highest honors; and the soldiers, before going on a military expedition, were sum-

* Many of these items are taken from Hirst, Hogarth, and Gould.

moned to the king's tent to listen to his warlike songs.

Thucydides says that when the Lacedemonians went into battle, it was the practice to play soft music for the purpose of preventing their courage from becoming too impetuous ; but that, on one occasion, when the day was going against them, Tyrtaeus, who was acting the part of a musician, quitted the soft Lydian mode, and began to play in the Phrygian style, which so re-animated the retiring troops, that they returned to the charge and gained the victory.

Plutarch relates that Terpander, by means of his music, appeased a violent sedition among the Spartans, and that Solon, merely by singing a poem of his own composition persuaded the Athenians to renew an unsuccessful war which they had given up in despair.

Plutarch also mentions that when the celebrated flute-player, Antigenides, played a martial air before Alexander, that monarch became so inflamed that he sprang from the table and seized his arms.

Amabaeus, the harper, whenever he sang on the stage, was paid for his performance an amount nearly equal to a thousand dollars, Federal money.

Mr. Bruce states that the Abyssinian trumpet is played slowly when no enemy appears in sight ; but when the enemy is near, it is sounded very quickly, and with great violence, and has the effect of transporting the soldiers with absolute fury

and madness, making them so regardless of life as to throw themselves with gallantry into the very midst of the enemy. The same effect is said to be produced by the bagpipe upon the Scottish Highlanders.

When William fought the desperate battle of Hastings, by which he obtained the title of Conqueror, he was accompanied by minstrels.

Luther says: "The devil specially hates good music, because thereby men are made joyful. . . . Music is the best soother of a troubled man whereby his heart is again quickened, refreshed, and made contented. It gives a quiet and joyful mind. My affection overflows and gushes out toward it, so often has it refreshed me, and relieved me from great sorrows."

He says to a friend who was afflicted with melancholy: "If the devil comes again and puts gloomy thoughts and cares into your head, say, 'Out, devil! I must now sing and pray to my Lord Christ!' then run to your organ, or call in your good friends, and sing a tune or two till you learn to defy the devil."

On another occasion he remarked: "Our singing distresses the devil, and hurts his feelings amazingly; but our impotence, and complaining, and groaning, please him mightily, and make him laugh in his sleeve."

The barbarous conqueror's heart is not proof against the softening power of music. When

Murad IV. had taken Bagdad by assault, in the year 1637, he ordered a general massacre of the inhabitants. One Persian alone dared to raise his voice: he demanded to be conducted to the Emperor, as having something of importance to communicate before he died. Having prostrated himself at the feet of Murad, Scakculi—for that was the Persian's name—cried, with his face to the earth, "Destroy not, O Sultan, with me, an art of more value than the whole empire; listen to my songs, and then thou shalt command my death." Murad consented. Scakculi drew from under his robe a little harp, and poured forth, extempore, a sort of romance on the ruins of Bagdad. The stern Murad, in spite of the shame which a Turk feels in betraying the least emotion, was melted into tears, and commanded the massacre to be stopped.

At the battle of Quebec, in the year 1760, while the British troops were retreating in great disorder, the pipers played a martial air; the retiring soldiers heard, and returned to their posts with alacrity and courage.

The character of the Peruvian Indians is uncommonly sombre at the present time, perhaps in consequence of the wrongs which they have suffered; but, on hearing the notes of the jaina, an instrument of very simple construction made of a large reed, the wildest horde, in the midst of uproar and debauchery, are instantly subdued into

silence. Tears will steal into the eye, and the sobs of the women are the only sounds that disturb the almost unearthly music.

The vigorous poetry and music of the Marseilles Hymn, acting on minds already excited by the events of a momentous crisis, aroused the population of France to an enthusiasm which rose to phrensy. Such is the influence of national airs set to strong and stirring words.

Insanity, it is said, has often been cured by the soothing strains of music.

When Haydn heard a psalm sung in unison by four thousand children, in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, he was moved to tears.

It is supposed that one-half of those who frequent the theatre are attracted thither by the music.

In England, the power of music was tried upon a lion with most surprising effect. The animal, having been reduced to a state of starvation, food was placed before him. Just as he commenced eating, the wooing voice of music was made to salute his ears. The voracious starveling instantly dropped the delicious morsel to listen. The music ceased, and again the lion proceeded to tear the meat with that terrific energy which hunger imparts. But the rush of soothing sounds invariably produced forgetfulness of the tempting meal, the experiment being repeatedly tried with the same

result. Even the skeleton king of the forest is captivated by music's charms.

The late Rev. Joseph Slatterie, of Chatham, England, was once walking in that town, when his attention was arrested by a youthful voice singing,

“ The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from the place;
Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.”

Pleased alike with the sweetness of the voice, and the cheerful tones in which the stanza was sung, our friend looked around to see whence the singing proceeded; but for some time he looked in vain. At length he saw a little sweep with his head popping out of a chimney, and waving, with a sort of triumph, his brush over his head. O, said the venerable minister, it made me weep in gratitude to think how singing the praises of God contributes to make even a poor chimney-sweep happy!

A minister in America, who was a stranger to the congregation, was, on a certain occasion, called to officiate in a cold and dreary Church. When he entered it, the wind howled, and loose clapboards and window-shutters clattered. The pulpit stood high above the first floor; there was no stove, but few persons in the Church, and they beating their

hands and feet to keep them from freezing. He asked himself: "Can I preach? Of what use can it be? What shall I do? If I read a hymn, can these two or three in the gallery sing?" He concluded to make the trial, and read,

"Jesus, lover of my soul,"—

"They commenced," says the preacher, "and the sound of a single female voice has followed me with an indescribably pleasing sensation ever since, and probably will while I live. The voice, intonation, articulation, and expression seemed to be perfect. I was warmed inside and out, and for the time was lost in rapture." The minister preached with unusual freedom and success, and learned never to be discouraged by unfavorable appearances.

The late lamented Cookman, who perished in the steamship *President*, is said to have been a most excellent singer. A writer says: "There was no place for a choir where Cookman sang. His voice was melody itself. The session of Congress was about to close upon the administration of Mr. Van Buren. Mr. Cookman had all his arrangements made to visit England, on the steamer *President*. The next Sabbath he was to take leave of the members of Congress in his farewell sermon. The day came. An hour before the usual time, the crowd was seen filling the pavements of the avenue, and pressing up the hill to

Representative Hall, which was soon filled to overflowing. Unable to get seats, many went away disappointed. The whole space on the rostrum and steps was filled with Senators and Representatives. The moment had come. Mr. Cookman, evidently much affected, kneeled in a thrilling prayer, and rose with his eyes blinded with tears. His voice faltered with suppressed emotion as he gave out the hymn:

“ ‘When marshaled on the nightly plain.’

“It was sung by Mr. Cookman alone. I can yet, in imagination, hear his voice as it filled the large hall, and as the last sounds, with their echoes, died away in the dome.”

One who went through the Mexican campaign says: “While stopping at the town of Matamoras, a number of our soldiers, as was their custom, met together to spend their time in rude and noisy revelry. Amid these social gatherings, the sound of vocal and instrumental music was always heard. Indeed, the majority of our men were excellent singers; and, as they came from various parts of the Union, the favorite airs of each section were soon made familiar. Although they generally preferred such as were of a light and trifling cast, still they often sang the tunes most popular with the different Churches. The persons to whom we have alluded had been assembled

for some time; the wine was flowing freely, and their hilarity steadily increased; everything seemed to promise them enjoyment. At this time, a soldier belonging to a Southern regiment entered the room, and taking a seat in the midst of the company, began singing, very deliberately, a hymn, commencing,

“‘O, sing to me of heaven!’

The tune was solemn and affecting; the language was moving and impressive. The strangeness of the circumstance at once secured the attention of all present, and, as the singer proceeded, the effect was striking; the liquor ceased to flow, the rude oaths were hushed, and the sound of merriment died away. When the last verse was concluded, a perfect stillness reigned; the spell of revelry had been broken, and their anticipated gayeties were doomed thus singularly to disappointment.”

The Rev. John E. Edwards, D. D., of Virginia, traveling in Europe a few years ago, visited the St. Nicholas Cathedral, at old Freyburg, in Switzerland, where he heard the exquisite music of the great organ built by Mozer. It was at the hour of sunset, when his thoughts had “played truant, and wandered away from the Alps, across the seas, and paid a visit to the loved ones at home.” Dr. Edwards says: “I have never been able to account for the effect produced on me. I

was moved to tears, and could not tell why. My heart beat quickly, strongly, and a strange shivering sensation trembled along every nerve."

One who had recently returned from a sea voyage gives us the following account: "On one of the delicious afternoons in February, peculiar to the West Indies, as the sun was declining below the western horizon, the ship lay in a calm near the Island of Cuba. The sea was uncommonly smooth, and the sails lay listless against the masts. . . . The sun was setting, and the whole ocean seemed of liquid gold. . . . At this hour a few of the officers assembled on the forecastle to contemplate the scene; and recalling the joys of other days, to hold that converse which in a small degree alleviates the privations of a seaman's life. . . . The father dwelt in tenderness on his distant family; the brother recalled the unbidden assiduities of a sister's love; and the son felt his heart softened by the recollection of a mother's care. . . . Such was the state of feeling, when a clear, melodious voice slowly poured forth the first line of that exquisite song—'Home, sweet home!' We had often heard that song, but never had it come so thrillingly as then. . . . The singer continued. As the song drew to a close, his emotion increased with that of every one who listened. At length, as the line, 'There's no place like home,' rose on the stillness of the hour for the last time, a

rush of feeling was evident, and, in many, showed itself in tears! Oh! it was good to look on men whom I had considered hardened in iniquity, thus throwing open the flood gates of long pent affections, that they might once more gladden and purify the soul! No one spoke; and after a few moments in which all else was banished by the one dear thought of the distant home we had exchanged for our 'home on the deep,' each one sought his pillow, I doubt not, a better and purer man."

A gay and thoughtless young lady left her home on a pleasure-seeking tour to a fashionable watering place. She arrived safely, but found, amid the ceaseless hilarity, "an aching void within." Being seated near an open window, she heard the soft, smooth voice of a servant girl as it warbled forth the words,

"O, for a closer walk with God,"—

As she listened her soul was drawn out in prayer with the words—

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be;
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee!"

She wept penitential tears, trusted in Christ, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

An actress, while passing a cottage on the way

to the theatre, had her attention arrested by a voice singing those familiar lines :

“ Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?”

She stood and listened as the singer proceeded :

“ Can my God His wrath forbear—
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?”

The heart was softened, and tears were shed. The words haunted her—

—————“ Can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?”

Neither the music nor the multitude at the theatre could hush that echo ; and when she came out to act her part, she stammered, grew confused, and very plaintively sang before the astonished audience :

“ Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for *me*?
Can my God His wrath forbear—
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?”

and bursting into tears, she told them that her studied part had passed from her memory, leaving that touching hymn in its stead, and that she could never rest until she sought and found the mercy that was still reserved for her. She turned, and left the stage, never to appear on it again.

The Rev. Robert A. Young, D.D., speaking of one of our foreign missionaries, says : “ I saw brother

Cunyngham last, a few years before he sailed for China. The woods were alive with horses and oxen; the servants were tearing and turning things in every direction about the camps; the tramp of many feet was heard; the hum of busy voices arose from little clumps of spectators that had gathered upon the encampment; Christian hearts were beating 'high and warm;' praises went up like the 'sound of many waters;' penitents wept and prayed at the altar; but, above all, the clear, well-toned and well-trained voice of brother Cunyngham arose, as he sang the hymn, commencing,

“ ‘O, may we meet in heaven!’

He was closing the services of a successful camp-meeting, in Tennessee. The tones of that voice linger in the ear of memory to this day.

“ ‘Perhaps in some far future land
We yet may meet, we yet may dwell.’”

In Macao, China, near Hong Kong, the principal occupation of the inhabitants is gaming. Here, on a certain occasion, a traveler found a company of gamblers in a back room on the upper floor of a hotel. At the table nearest him, there was an American, about twenty-five years old, playing with an old man. They had been betting and drinking. While the gray-haired man was shuffling the cards for “a new deal,” the young man,

in a swaggering, careless way, sang, to a very pathetic tune, the following words:

“ One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o’er and o’er,
I’m nearer my home to-day
Than I’ve ever been before;
Nearer the crystal gate
Where we lay our burdens down,
Nearer leaving my cross,
Nearer wearing my crown.”

Hearing the singing, several gamblers looked up in surprise. The old man, who was dealing the cards, putting on a look of melancholy, stopped for a moment, gazed steadfastly at his partner in the game, and then dashed the whole pack of cards on the floor under the table. Then said he—“Where did you learn that tune?” The young man pretended that he did not know that he had been singing. “Well, no matter,” said the old man, “I’ve played my last game, and that’s the end of it. The cards may lie there till doomsday, and I will never pick them up.” The old man having won money from the young man, about one hundred dollars, took it out of his pocket, and handing it to the young man said: “Here, Harry, is your money, take it and do good with it. I shall with mine.”

As the traveler followed them down stairs, he saw them conversing by the door-way, and overheard enough to know that the old man was saying something about the song which the young man had sung.

This song was, doubtless, learned at a mother's knee, or in the Sunday School, and may have been the means of the salvation of these two gamblers, and of multitudes through their influence. .

We close these illustrative instances with but one more narrative out of the many others that might be given.

A nobleman of great wealth, whose pleasure was drawn from his riches, his honors and friends, had a daughter, who was the idol of his heart. She was highly accomplished, amiable in her disposition, and winning in her manners. At length, Miss —— attended a Methodist meeting in London, was awakened, and soon happily converted. Afterward, to her the charms of Christianity were overpowering. The change was marked by her fond father with great solicitude, and was to him occasion of deep grief. He took her on long and frequent journeys, and attended her in the most engaging manner, in order to divert her mind from religion; but she still maintained her integrity as a Christian. After failing in all his projects, he introduced her into company under such circumstances that she must either join in the recreation of the party or give high offense. It had been arranged among his friends that several young ladies should, on the approaching festive occasion, give a song, accompanied by the piano-forte. The hour arrived, the party assembled. Several pieces

had been performed to the great delight of the company who were now in high spirits. Miss —— was called on for a song, and many hearts beat high in hope of victory. Should she decline, she was disgraced. Should she comply, their triumph was complete. This was the moment to seal her fate. With perfect self-possession, she took her seat, ran her fingers over the keys, and commenced playing and singing, in a sweet air, the following words:

“ No room for mirth or trifling here,
For worldly hope or worldly fear,
If life so soon be gone;
If now the Judge is at the door,
And all mankind must stand before
The inexorable throne.

“ No matter which my thoughts employ,
A moment's misery or joy;
But, O, when both shall end,
Where shall I find my destined place?
Shall I my everlasting days
With fiends or angels spend?”

She arose from her seat. The whole party was subdued. Not a word was spoken. Her father wept aloud. One by one the company left the house. Lord —— never rested till he became a child of God. He lived an example of Christian benevolence, having given to various enterprises, up to the time of his death, nearly half a million dollars.

From the foregoing narratives, and from the

power of song, as shown in former chapters, we see that music has exerted a magic influence in all ages, and in all climes. Its dulcet charms have captivated the prince and the peasant, the stalwart man and the gentle maiden, the child and the patriarch, the civilian, the savage, and even the ravenous beast of prey. Its martial notes have turned the scale of battle, and decided the fate of nations.

- “ Music, all-powerful o’er the human mind,
Can still each mental storm, each tumult calm,
Soothe anxious care on sleepless couch reclined,
And e’en fierce anger’s furious rage disarm.
- “ At her command the various passions lie;
She stirs to battle, or she lulls to peace,
Melts the charmed soul to thrilling ecstasy,
And bids the jarring world’s harsh clangor cease.
- “ Her martial sounds can fainting troops inspire
With strength unwonted and enthusiasm raise,
Infuse new ardor, and with youthful fire
Urge on the warrior grey with length of days.
- “ Oh! surely melody from heaven was sent,
To cheer the world when tired of human strife,
To soothe the wayward heart by sorrow rent,
And soften down the rugged road of life.”

In this connection, the romantic dreams of heathen writers will be regarded as expressing the truth in hyperbole. When Orpheus played on the flute, the rivers are said to have ceased to flow, the savage beasts of the forest to forget their wildness, and the mountains are said to have come to listen to his song. All nature seemed

animated and charmed, and the nymphs were his constant companions. With his lyre in his hand, he entered the infernal regions, and gained easy admission to the palace of Pluto. The King of hell was charmed with the melody of his strains, the wheel of Ixion stopped, the stone of Sisyphus stood still, Tantalus forgot his perpetual thirst, and even the Furies relented.

Amphion was also famous for his musical talent. At the sound of his lyre, the rocks moved from their places; and the animated stones rose up, and formed themselves into the wall of Thebes. Perhaps we are to understand by this that Amphion by his music tamed the spirits, and softened the fierce manners of the savage Thebans, thus inducing them to build a wall for their defense.

Songs are often more potent than the "strong arm of the law." Hence, the saying of the sagacious moralist—"Let me make the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws."

Music not unfrequently holds empire over the soul from childhood to old age. The poet may, therefore, well exclaim :

" Music, the tender child of rudest times,
The gentle native of all lands and climes ;
Who hymns alike man's cradle and his grave,
Lulls the low cot, or peals along the nave."

In many of the instances illustrative of the power of music, given in this chapter, there was nothing but sound; in others, words sung by

individuals; but the effects were truly astonishing. What, then, may we not expect when an inspiring tune, set to sacred words, is sung, "in spirit and in truth," by a worshiping assembly?

Would that all could feel that the songs of Zion are intended to be A GREAT POWER in the Church.

Why should we sing? We should sing because God has given us the ability; because He has made it our duty and our privilege to sing; because He is infinitely worthy of praise; because sacred song is a grand means of bringing sinners to Christ, and "showers of blessings" upon believers.

We should gladly engage in the service of praise that we may ultimately sing in heaven. Earth's pursuits and joys are temporal; love and song are eternal. Here, dispensations of grace succeed each other; church edifices fall into decay; congregations are broken up; ministers die; and soon shall be heard the echo of the last song of Zion sung on earth. Faith will be lost in the "beatific vision;" Hope, the saint's guardian angel, having conducted him to the "shining shore," will leave him amid the enduring splendors of immortality; but LOVE will "STILL LIVE AND SING."

Here, in the midst of our worship, we hear the voice of wailing, but

"No sighs shall mingle with the songs
Which warble from immortal tongues."

Here sickness enfeebles the voice, and in death it

is hushed; but the language of the grateful, Christian heart is: "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise unto my God while I have any being." With deep emotion, he thus addresses his Divine Benefactor:

"Through every period of my life,
Thy goodness I'll pursue;
And after death, in distant worlds,
The pleasing theme renew.

"When nature fails, and day and night
Divide Thy works no more,
My ever grateful heart, O Lord,
Thy mercies shall adore.

"Through all eternity to Thee
A grateful song I'll raise;
But O! eternity's too short
To utter all Thy praise."

We bid all travelers to the celestial Canaan God-speed! We congratulate them on the blissful prospect which lies before them; as it is said—"the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

While we live, may we all sing away our sorrows, and may death be to us but a quaver rest in the song of Redemption. O, that it may ultimately be said to us—"Awake and Sing, ye that dwell in dust!"

Cherishing this "good hope, through grace," we repeat a few words from the Scriptures, and then take our leave :

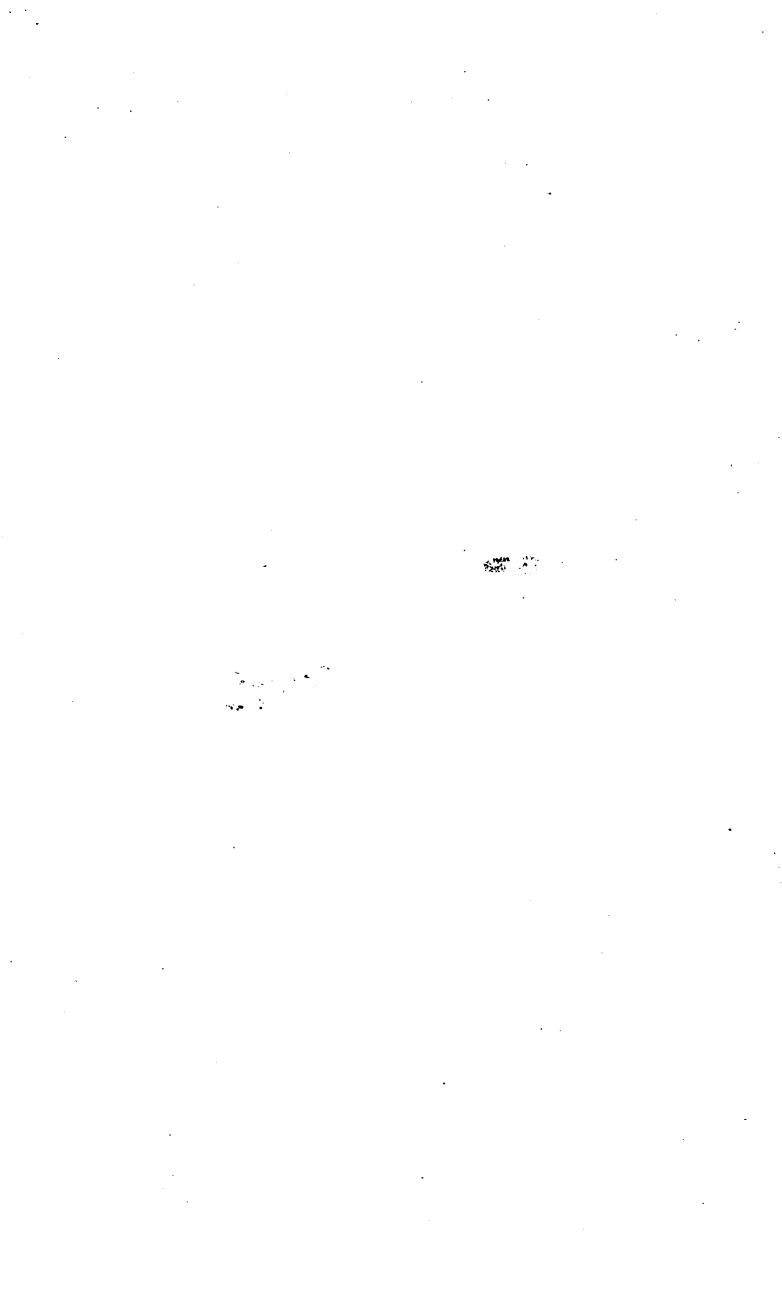
GOD IS GONE UP WITH A SHOUT, THE LORD WITH THE SOUND OF A TRUMPET.

SING PRAISES TO GOD, SING PRAISES ; SING PRAISES UNTO OUR KING, SING PRAISES : FOR GOD IS THE KING OF ALL THE EARTH : SING YE PRAISES WITH UNDERSTANDING.

THE END.

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